

TO: Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Heads, and Directors

FROM: Jere W. Morehead, President
S. Jack Hu, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Ryan A. Nesbit, Vice President for Finance and Administration

RE: FY 2026 (FY26) Budget Planning and Salary Setting

As the FY 2026 budget planning and salary setting process begins today, we want to share several highlights with you:

- UGA's FY26 budget allocation from the USG includes the formula growth funding generated by UGA's FY24 student credit hours.
- UGA's strong enrollment continues to provide positive tuition revenue to the University.
- The University is able to fund the credit hour allocation model in full while adding additional faculty lines through the President's Hiring Initiatives.
- UGA's FY26 budget planning does include a reduction in federal funding, including indirect cost recovery, given continued uncertainty from our funding agencies. Cross-functional teams from across the University continue to monitor this situation and provide updates as necessary.
- You should approach all spending decisions with care and foresight keeping the best interests of our students in mind. While we remain committed to supporting growth and innovation, it is important to recognize the potential risks that may lie ahead in the coming year.

The Board of Regents' 2026 Salary and Wage Administration guidelines allow for targeted merit-based increases to recognize and reward up to 15 percent of faculty and staff for their outstanding service. UGA is in the process of implementing this targeted merit-based salary program for FY26 and will provide additional information on the guidelines and the process to make recommendations in the near future. In the meantime, the University will be allocating funding for some limited salary adjustments outlined below.

Staff Salaries - Minimum Salary Rates: For the thirteenth time in the last fourteen years, UGA is directing additional funds in its FY26 budget to increase its minimum salaries for regular, fully benefitted staff; the minimum rate will rise from \$34,000 to \$34,500 (\$16.587 per hour) on July 1, 2025.

As part of this MHR increase, funding is included to implement UGA's Journeys initiative. Funding is being provided to ensure all regular, fully benefitted staff members meet the pay grade minimum assigned to their classification in the new salary structure.

The FY26 budget also includes additional funding to ensure that all non-benefitted, part-time staff are earning a minimum of \$14.00 per hour (current minimum is \$13.80) and that all student employees will earn a minimum of \$11.75 per hour (current minimum is \$11.50).

Graduate Assistantship Stipends: To recognize the importance of graduate students and their contributions to teaching, research and service and to assist in offsetting fees and other educational expenses, UGA is providing additional funds in its FY26 budget to increase the University's graduate student assistantship rates by 2%. This will increase the minimum fiscal-year, full-time rates to \$60,730 for master's students and \$65,665 for doctoral students. This self-funded increase by UGA is to recognize the increased cost of living for graduate students. Academic units, at their discretion, can implement additional increases as funding allows, but must first clearly document and receive approval for how any additional increase will not adversely impact the instructional mission. Further information is provided in the Salary Guidelines noted below.

Please continue to manage your resources thoughtfully and use them to strategically support the educational experience of our students by enhancing the quality of our academic programs.

For more detailed information on salary administration, please refer to the Salary Increase Guidelines. These comprehensive guidelines can be found on the University Budget Office website at https://busfin.uga.edu/budget/pdf/Salary_Increase_Guidelines.pdf.

In order to meet the budget submission deadline set by the Board of Regents in preparation for the May 2025 Board meeting, your assistance in completing budget planning and salary setting by **April 25, 2025** is appreciated.

The official FY 2026 budget planning and salary setting schedule can be found on the University Budget Office website at <https://busfin.uga.edu/budget/BPSSSchedule26.pdf>

If you have questions regarding the FY 2026 budget planning and salary setting process or the information included on your Allocation Sheet, please contact the University Budget Office at (706) 542-2802 or email budgets@uga.edu. Thank you for your leadership, efforts and assistance in the University's budget planning and salary setting process.

cc: Kathy R. Pharr, Chief of Staff to the President and Vice President for Marketing & Communications
Juanita Hicks, Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
James N. Shore, Senior Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration and Budget Director
Toni Rogers, Associate Vice President for Academic Fiscal Affairs