

TA RA GA Stipend Survey Report

TA RA GA Stipend Committee
Graduate Student Assembly
The University of Texas at Dallas

<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Methodology</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Section 1: Stipend data</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Section 2: Financial Situation of TA/RA/GA</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Section 3: Work experience of TA/RA/GA.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Section 4: Academic experience of TA/RA/GA</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Section 5: Wellbeing of TA/RA/GA.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Section 6: Summary and GSA Recommendation</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Credits & Acknowledgments.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Appendix.....</i>	<i>37</i>

Introduction

This report aims to analyze the results of the TA/RA/GA Stipend Survey carried out by the Graduate Student Assembly. This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the survey results gathered from the graduate students of the University of Texas at Dallas, examining its different aspects and presenting an in-depth analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Our goal is to provide the reader with a clear understanding of the collected responses and to offer valuable insights that can be used to inform decision-making. Using research, data, and critical thinking, we aim to provide an objective and unbiased analysis that will serve as a valuable resource for our readers.

Methodology

Purpose of the Survey

1. A number of postgraduate students have expressed their reservations about the remuneration they receive for their roles as teaching and research assistants. They have communicated with us through various means such as attending our general body meetings, sending us emails, and utilizing the GSA website. The crux of their feedback pertains to the inadequacy of the stipend to cover their basic living expenses, which, in turn, has a negative impact on their academic pursuits.
2. In light of the numerous inquiries, we opted to address this matter by establishing a GSA Working Group. The group was tasked with investigating the matter further and conducted a survey to ascertain whether other postgraduate students were experiencing similar issues.
3. The preliminary results, which were quite compelling, prompted the formation of a committee with the approval of the GSA leadership. The committee's objective is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the findings and to communicate the results to relevant administrators who could potentially benefit from this information.
4. As members of the community, we are invested in the success of both the institution and its students. We are committed to identifying any significant issues that need addressing as UTD continues to flourish and expand rapidly. We recognize that our success is inextricably linked to the success of UTD, and vice versa.
5. Being an "R1: Doctoral Universities - Very high research activity" institution, UT Dallas expended \$140 million on research activities in the 2022 fiscal year, with \$60 million of it being derived from federal funding. As the institution grows, it is imperative to devise strategies for attracting and retaining the top students. We hope that this analysis will aid UTD in achieving this objective.

Sampling

1. The graduate student survey was distributed via email to the TA/RA/GA recipients of UTD's stipend to gather their feedback on the stipend's adequacy. Additionally, other

analyses were conducted on both stipend recipients and non-recipients among the TA/RA/GA group to gain insights into the academic experiences of PhD students.

Survey Design

1. The survey was devised to delve deeper into the academic, professional, and financial circumstances of PhD students who are serving as TA/RA/GA.
2. Responses from participants who identified themselves as master's students were routed to the survey's conclusion through branch logic. Similarly, responses from participants who identified as PhD students but not serving as TA/RA/GA were also directed to the end of the survey through branch logic.
3. The responses received from PhD students serving as TA/RA/GA were analyzed to gain insights into their academic and professional experiences.
4. Responses from participants who identified as PhD students serving as TA/RA/GA but not receiving stipends were guided to the survey's conclusion through branch logic.
5. The survey questions primarily centered around the financial circumstances of TA/RA/GA receiving a stipend, with a particular emphasis on this aspect.
6. The survey incorporated both single-response questions and open-ended text responses. The purpose of the text responses was to gather personal feedback and detailed insights from participants on their experiences, which could not be sufficiently captured by the single-response questions. The inclusion of open-ended text responses allowed us to address this issue and gain a better understanding of the complexities of the situation.

Data Collection

1. The survey was conducted online using Qualtrics. To ensure the accuracy of the analysis, incomplete and preview responses were filtered out, and these responses will be identified in the relevant sections.

Data Analysis

1. For data analysis and plotting, RStudio and R were employed. Incomplete responses and empty string responses were removed from the dataset to ensure the accuracy of the analysis. To enhance readability, the text responses were carefully reviewed by committee members and sorted into categories.

Results

1. To enhance readability, the survey analysis results were classified into relevant sections based on the feedback received. The sections represented a subset of the raw feedback collected from the relevant participants. Most text responses obtained during the survey were listed in the appendix, along with the corresponding questions.

Section 1: Stipend data

This section will compose of survey questions and data gathered relating to the stipend and its analysis.

We received 1349 responses from graduate students. This included master's and PhD students. 40 of these responses classified as spam were removed. 11 responses were due to survey previews. 1298 responses were considered. Out of this, 267 responders did not complete the survey and their responses were omitted.

Out of the remaining 1031 responses, 232 were from master's students leaving 799 responses from PhD students.

S1A: Survey question: **Are you a Research Assistant (RA), Teaching Assistant (TA) or Graduate Assistant (GA)?**

From the 799 PhD students who responded to the survey, 788 (98.6%) are employed as RA TA GA at the University of Texas at Dallas.

Table 1.1: Breakdown of Responses

Response	Count
GA	7 (0.01%)
RA	320 (40.86%)
TA	461 (58.5%)

S1B: Survey question: **What school at the University of Texas at Dallas are you currently enrolled in?**

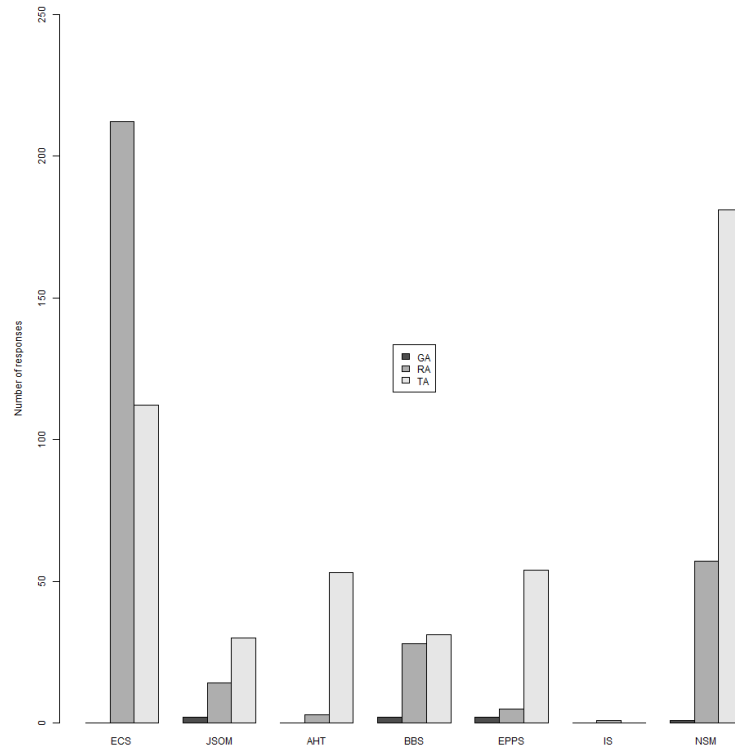


Figure 1.1: RA TA GA Breakdown by School

By considering survey questions S1A and S1B, we provide the following breakdown that represents the number of TA/RA/GA survey responders from each school:

Table 1.2: TA/RA/GA Responders by School

School	ECS	JSOM	AHT	BBS	EPPS	IS	NSM
GA	0	2	0	2	2	0	1
RA	212	14	3	5	5	1	57
TA	112	30	53	54	54	0	181
Total	324	46	56	61	61	1	239

S1C: Survey question: **Do you receive a monthly stipend from the University of Texas at Dallas?**

By considering survey responses to S1B and S1C, we provide the following breakdown that represents the number of TA/RA/GA survey responders who receive a stipend from UTD by their school.

Table 1.3: TA/RA/GA Responders Receiving a Monthly Stipend

Position	ECS	JSOM	AHT	BBS	EPPS	IS	NSM	Total by position
GA	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	5
RA	203	14	3	28	5	1	56	310
TA	108	29	51	31	54	0	177	450
Total by School	311	45	54	59	61	1	234	765

Of the 788 respondents who are employed as TA/RA/GA at UTD, 765 (97%) receive a monthly stipend.

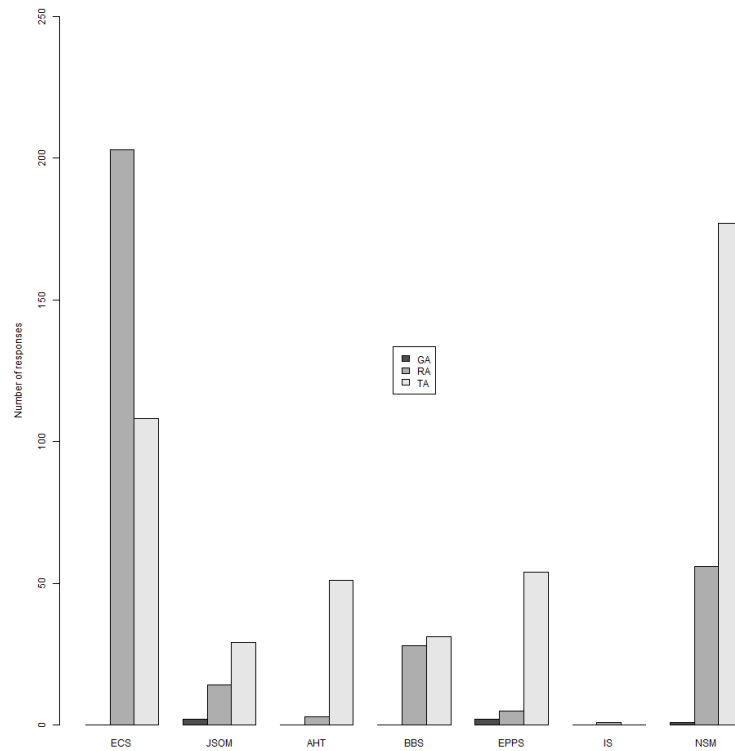


Figure 1.2: RA TA GA Responses Receiving a Monthly Stipend

S1D: Survey question: **What is your monthly stipend (after taxes)?**

Blank responses were omitted before processing. The data in table 1.4 displays the results of 763 responses.

Table 1.4: Monthly Stipend Amount by Bracket

Stipend Bracket	Count of Responses in Bracket
< \$500	0 (0.0%)
\$500 - \$1000	6 (0.8%)
\$1000 - \$1500	8 (1.0%)
\$1500 - \$2000	615 (80.6%)
\$2000 - \$2500	87 (11.4%)
\$2500 - \$3500	47 (6.2%)

The values denoted in red inside Figure 1.3 represent the respective school's median stipend amount (in USD).

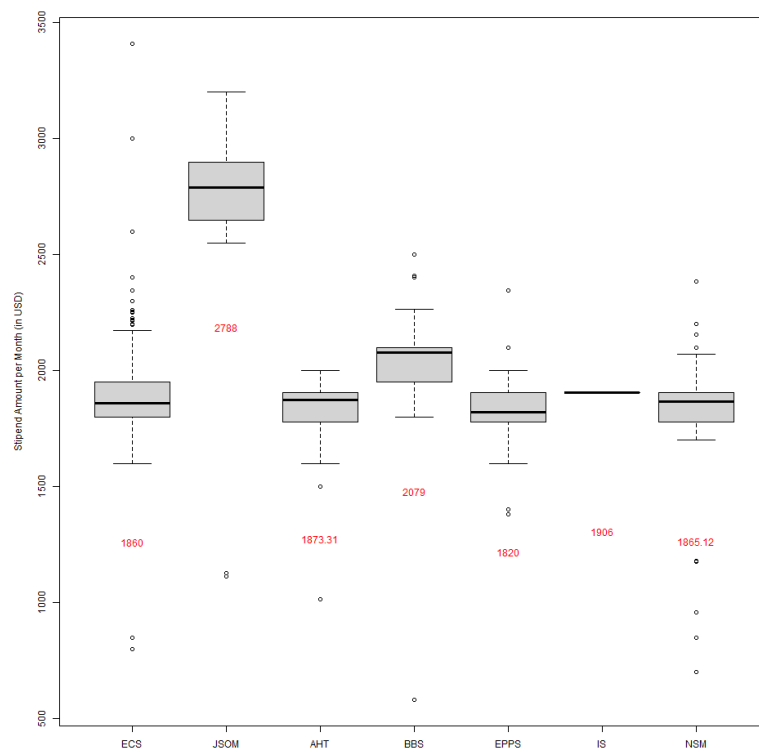


Figure 1.3: Analysis of Stipend Amount by School

S1E: Survey question: **Out of the monthly stipend you receive from the University of Texas at Dallas, what percentage is left/saved by the end of the month (answer to the nearest percentage)?**

Table 1.5: Percentage of Monthly Stipend Saved by End of Month

Percentage	≤10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Frequency	624	74	32	12	8	1	4	3	0	7

Section 2: Financial Situation of TA/RA/GA

In this section, we will discuss the financial conditions of TA/RA/GA, that receive a stipend from the University of Texas at Dallas. This includes basic monthly expenses incurred and an overview of their current financial situation. By examining these factors, we can better understand their financial stability and identify areas that considerably affect their financial health.

S2A: Survey question: Do you have scholarships from the University of Texas at Dallas to cover tuition and/or other academic expenses (private scholarships or scholarships from other schools are not going to be counted)?

This question was responded to by PhD TA/RA/GA students, and it totaled 778 responses.

Table 2.1: Scholarships received from UTD by School

School	No	Yes
ECS	94	230
JSOM	8	38
AHT	17	39
BBS	24	37
EPPS	22	39
IS	0	1
NSM	45	194

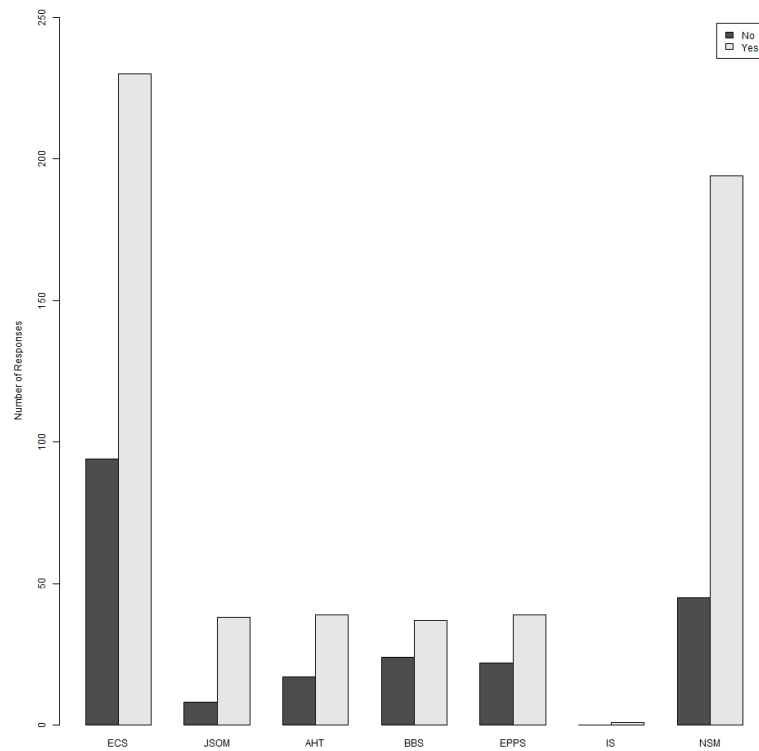


Figure 2.1: Responses for Scholarships Received by School

S2B: Survey question: **How much of a fraction of your tuition do these scholarships cover (answer to the nearest percentage)?**

This survey question was responded to by those who answered ‘Yes’ to S2A. Please note that some responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information.

Table 2.2: Percentage of Tuition Covered from Scholarships

Percentage of tuition covered by scholarship	Frequency
0%	4 (0.7%)
10%	4 (0.7%)
20%	1 (0.2%)
40%	2 (0.3%)
50%	5 (0.9%)
70%	1 (0.2%)
80%	3 (0.5%)
90%	7 (1.2%)
100%	551 (95.3%)

S2C: Survey question: **What is your monthly rent?**

This question was answered by students classified as PhD TA/RA/GA that receives a stipend from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Table 2.3: Categorical Monthly Rent Amount

Monthly Rent Brackets (in USD)	Number of Responses
(\$0, \$500]	24 (3.2%)
(\$500, \$1000]	347 (46.1%)
(\$1000, \$1500]	251 (33.3%)
(\$1500, \$2000]	86 (11.4%)
(\$2000, \$2500]	39 (5.2%)
(\$2500, \$3500]	5 (0.7%)
(\$3500, \$4000]	1 (0.1%)

713 students pay more than 30% of their stipend towards rent. This includes 470 students who spend more than 50% of their stipend towards rent. The dashed line represents the recommended percentage of income that should be allocated for rent. As a general rule of thumb, it is recommended that you should spend no more than 30% of your gross monthly income on rent. This ensures you have enough money to cover other essential expenses, such as utilities, food, transportation, and savings.

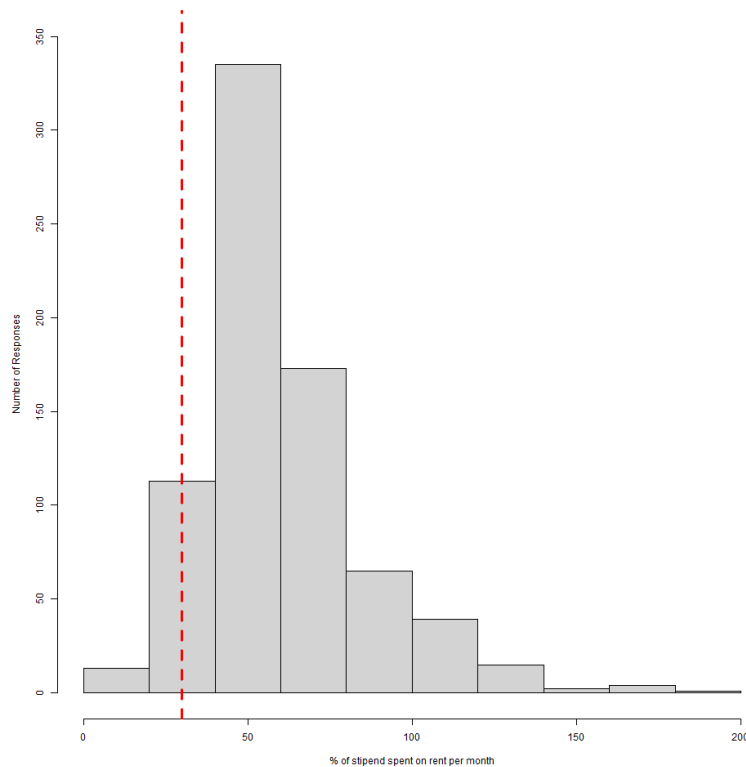


Figure 2.2: Percentage of Stipend Spent on Monthly Rent

S2D: Survey question: **How much do you pay for car insurance?**

This was a text response question. We received responses that did not specify how often payments were made. Therefore, we considered the responses that only specified the amount and the frequency of payments. Figure 2.3 represents 138 responses. The results show that most responses fall between \$50 to \$150.

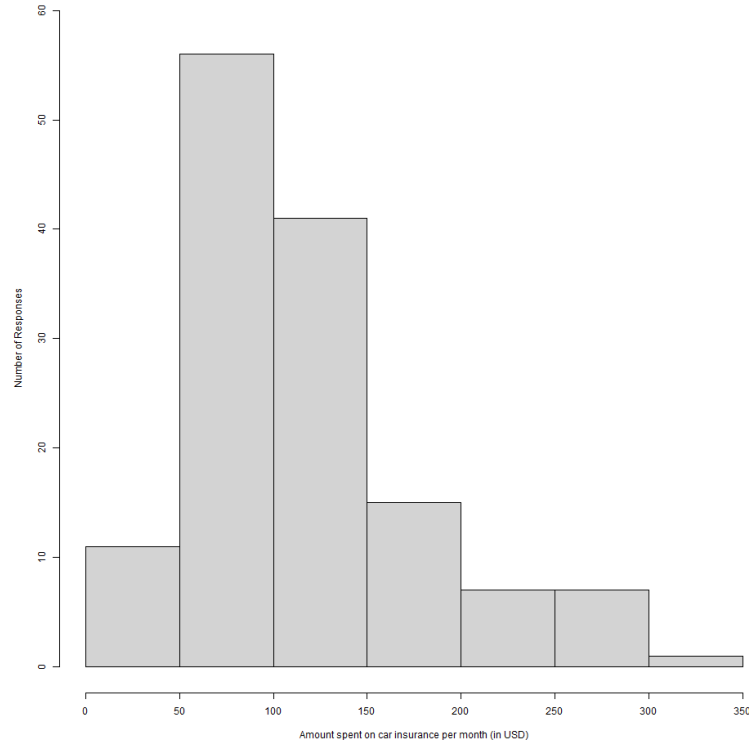


Figure 2.3: Amount of Stipend Spent on Car Insurance

S2E: Survey question: **How much do you pay for car's parking permit?**

This was a text response question. We received responses that did not specify how often payments were made. Therefore, we considered the responses that only specified the amount and the frequency of payments. Figure 2.4 represents 113 responses.

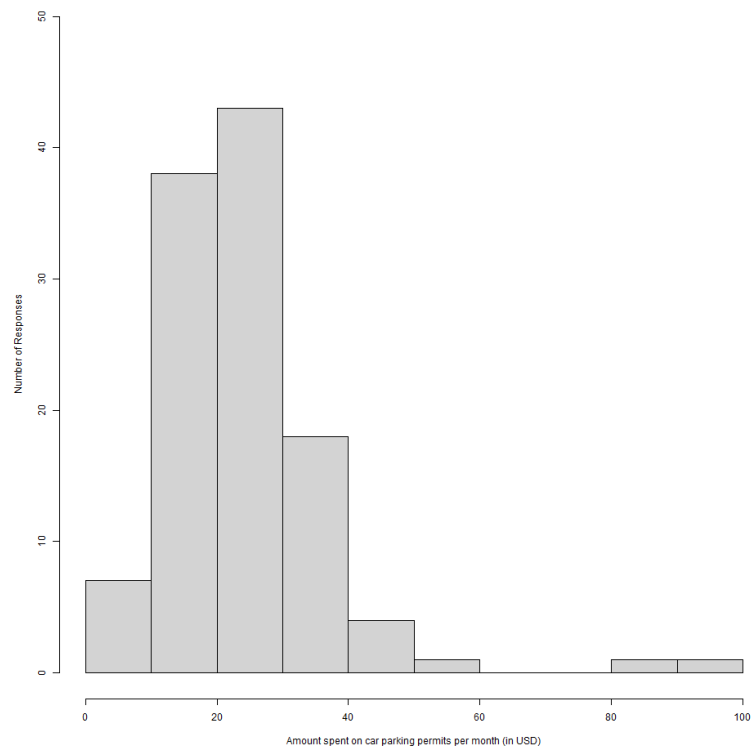


Figure 2.4: Amount of Stipend Spent on Car Parking Permits by Month

S2F: Survey question: **How much do you pay for gas?**

This was a text response question. We received responses that did not specify how often payments were made. Therefore, we considered the responses that only specified the amount and the frequency of payments. Figure 2.5 represents 184 responses.

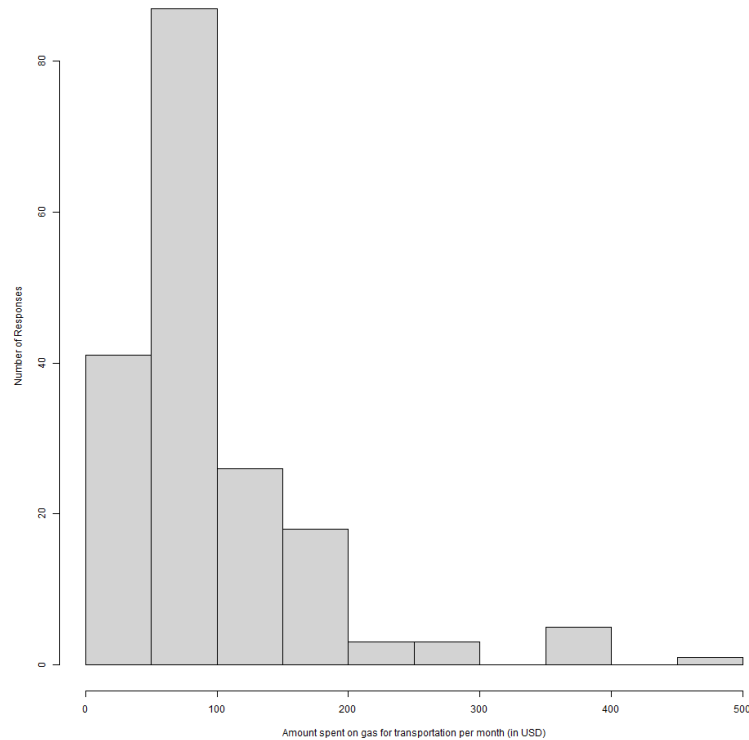


Figure 2.5: Amount of Stipend Spent Monthly on Gas

S2G: Survey question: **How much do you pay for food on a monthly basis?**

Table 2.4 represents the results of 754 responses. Please note that some responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information.

Table 2.4: Monthly Food Expenses by Brackets

Bracket	Number of Responses
(0,250]	127 (16.8%)
(250,500]	426 (56.5%)
(500, 1000]	183 (24.3%)
(1000, 3000]	18 (2.4%)

S2H: Survey question: **Please list out any other significant monthly expenses along with how much you pay for them (Try to be as specific as possible).**

This was a text response question. There were a total of 692 comments which were separated into 15 categories. The comments were further analyzed by selecting for the monthly expense amount, and calculating the median for each category. The respective categories and their results are given below:

Table 2.5: Count and Median of Other Monthly Expenses

Category	Count	Median
Utilities	268	\$170
Healthcare	55	\$100
Auto repair/Car payments	18	\$200
Renter's insurance	14	\$15
Personal Care	50	\$50
Family care/Dependents	33	\$400
Pet care	13	\$100
Loan payments	41	\$300
Credit cards/Savings	18	\$263
Commodities (Food, groceries, etc.)	27	\$200
Shopping/Personal expenditure	30	\$100
Travel/Transport	51	\$100
Hobbies/Entertainment	32	\$100
Academic expenditures	24	\$166
Other	18	\$88

S2I: Survey question: **Out of the monthly stipend you receive from the University of Texas at Dallas, what percentage is left/saved by the end of the month (answer to the nearest percentage)?**

Majority of responders save less than or equal to 10% of their monthly stipend.

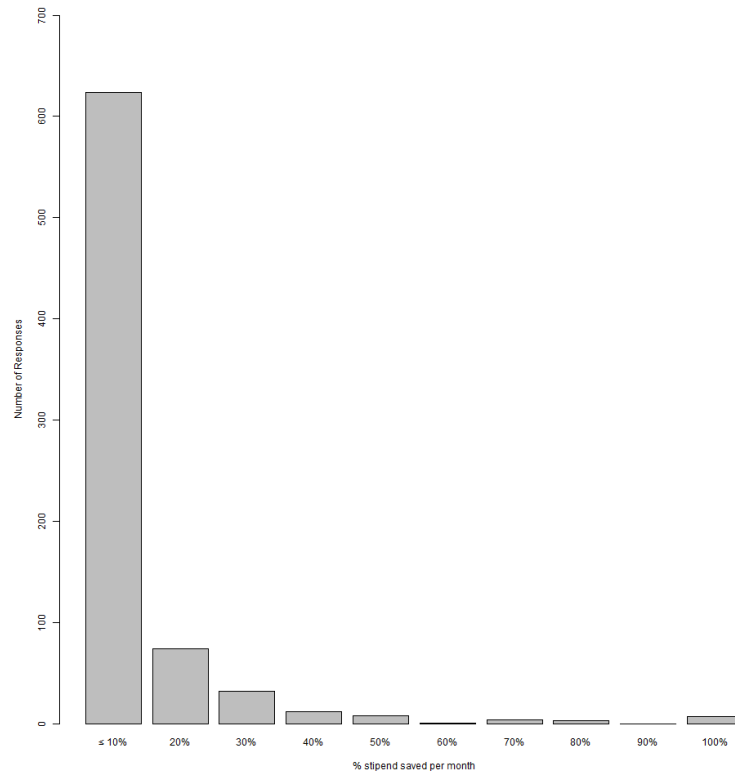


Figure 2.6: Percentage of Stipend Saved by End of Month

S2J: Survey question: **Have you ever spent more than the monthly stipend you receive?**

Please note that 23 responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information. A total of 765 responses are represented in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Breakdown of Responses to Spending More than the Monthly Stipend

Spent More than Monthly Stipend	No	Yes
Responses	78 (10.2%)	687 (89.8%)

S2K: Survey question: **How often do you spend more than the monthly stipend you receive (per year)?**

According to the information presented in Table 2.7, Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, and Graduate Assistants who receive a stipend within the range of \$1500 - \$2000 tend to spend more than their stipend amount on a regular basis.

Table 2.7: Responses by Income Bins for Frequency of Monthly Expenses Exceeding Stipend

Number of Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Income Bracket												
(0,500]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(500, 1000]	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
(1000, 1500]	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3
(1500, 2000]	24	52	65	66	29	45	11	28	17	36	5	175
(2000, 2500]	3	11	8	12	7	6	0	7	6	4	0	17
(2500, 3500]	1	3	4	8	2	4	0	3	1	3	2	8
Total	28	66	78	87	41	56	11	38	24	44	7	205

S2L: Survey question: **what recurring/unforeseen expenses causes you to spend more than the monthly stipend you receive (be as specific as possible)?**

This survey question requested a text response and displayed only to the respondents that answered ‘Yes’ to S2J.

To provide a concise summary of the responses, we separated them into 8 distinct categories. In order to provide an overview without overwhelming readers with an excessive amount of information, we have highlighted the key findings by mentioning some of the responses received under each category. It is important to note that the comments presented here are the unedited raw responses provided by survey respondents.

Category 1: Everyday Necessities

“Rent has increased substantially in Dallas in the past 2 years (by about \$300 for me). This has been my biggest financial barrier. To find better priced rent in a safer area, I now live further from campus and have to commute -- thus I have a car payment, car insurance, and gas to pay in addition to rent.”

“Rent is increasing more than 20% every 6 months as well as other costs with current inflation. When I started my PhD back in 2020, living cost was not that high and monthly expenditures were tantamount to 60 percent of my stipend. But now, its quite difficult for a PhD student to survive in a city like Dallas with that stipend.”

“a higher electricity bill, stolen bike, broken laptop, clothes for the winter”

“Just living expenses. Cost of living (rent, food, gas, etc.) has increased over 50% for me since I started, even though I have made no lifestyle changes. Our pay has not come close to keeping up.”

“technology expenses for grad school (laptop, books, etc.). Laptops are so expensive that they take almost an year's savings.”

Category 2: Travel

“transportation: I am an international student, and I need to go back home in winter/summer break, but the stipend is far from covering the flight ticket, so I have to ask my parents to support me, otherwise, I cannot go home.”

“Buying domestic and international air tickets to visit family which costs around 2000\$ on average per person each year.”

Category 3: Medical Bills

“emergency room bill that caused \$900 for one visit; another gynocology medical bill that took 3 doctor visits and costed around \$800 for procedures.”

“sometimes seeing a doctor requires some out of pocket costs”

Category 4: Autocare

“Flat tire/car trouble. I spend more than my monthly stipend every month 1800 is not a livable wage in Dallas tx I have to rely on my savings and help from parents who I will pay back when I can”

“Car problems. I had a wreck on campus that totaled my car and could barely afford a rental car.”

Category 5: Family

“I have three dependents. Thats why I spend more than my stipend and health insurance and food are very costly.”

“Have to send money to look after my family. I am the only person with income”

Category 6: Loans

“late payments charges for credit card”

Category 5: Other

“I have had house repair expenses this year that required me to go over my stipend some months. I also have pet medical bills that can get pretty expensive. Although we have insurance, co-pays can still be pretty high. I was sent to a neuropsychologist this past year for ADHD testing and co-pay was 500, so that took me over my monthly stipend. Although I am generally satisfied with the stipend I receive, it worries me that I don't make quite enough to have savings in case of emergencies.”

“High inflation and increasing prices in almost all products. Huge increase in monthly rent. Not a single item causes this. My stipend hardly covers the basic elements of a simple life. Let alone traveling or anything that can improve the quality life of me and my wife.”

“Im a mom with a mortgage and kids.”

S2M: Survey question: **How many roommates/other people do you currently live with?**

Please note that 26 responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information. 762 responses are represented in Table 2.8

Table 2.8: Number of Roommates Living with Respondent

Number of Roommates	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	10
Responses	174 (22.8%)	310 (40.6%)	133 (17.5%)	72 (9.4%)	46 (6%)	18 (2.3%)	6 (0.8%)	2 (0.3%)	1 (0.1%)

S2N: Survey question: **How do you get to school? - Selected Choice**

Please note that 23 responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information.

Table 2.9: Responses to Mode of Transportation

Transportation Type	Number of Responses
Biking/Walking	97 (12.7%)
Car	436 (57.0%)
Other	32 (4.2%)
UTD Bus	200 (26.1%)

S2N provided text response options to those who selected 'other' as their choice, which encompassed DART, other public transportation, and students residing on campus.

S2O: Survey question: **Do you rely on comet cupboard for food? - Selected Choice**

Please note that 23 responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information.

Table 2.10: Responses to Use of Comet Cupboard Service

Comet Cupboard for Food	Number of Responses
No	571 (74.6%)
Sometimes	150 (19.6%)
Yes	44 (5.8%)

S2O offered text response options to individuals who selected 'sometimes' as their response. A total of 21 responses were given, and some of the examples are outlined below. It is important to note that the comments presented here are the unedited raw feedback provided by survey respondents.

“At comet cupboard, we usually find things that we might use daily or ready to eat meals for free, helping us add to our savings for emergencies”

“When my monthly budget runs out especially during the end of a semester when the instructors put undue pressure to post grades.”

“since I get stipend I don't feel right taking from comet cupboard and would instead leave it for the needy and students who rely on their parents”

S2Q: Survey question: Based on your financial situation as a TA/RA/GA receiving a monthly stipend from the University of Texas at Dallas, would you recommend people to pursue a PhD at the University of Texas at Dallas?

The question requested a text response, and a total of 768 responses were gathered. Out of these, 476 individuals answered 'no,' 215 answered 'yes,' and there were 43 respondents who answered 'maybe.' A majority provided detailed responses, and some of them are outlined below. It is worth noting that the comments presented are unedited, raw responses from the survey participants.

“I would if they are financially stable, if not then I would tell them to reconsider for a place that offers more money in to their stipend”

“I would recommend people without any financial pressures”

“It's hard to manage financially with current increase in almost every expense. But the school offers a great deal for us to try our best to cope with it.”

“I would recommend them to pursue a degree here but to think about their living arrangements and maybe compare the stipend to other offers.”

“if the stipend was a little bit higher for sure i would recommend to do a phd at UTD”

“If they will depend on the stipend, No. if they have a sponsor, yes”

“It is more competitive than a lot of places. But my honest answer is that anyone who wants a PhD needs to have a great enough reason to make the necessary sacrifices. It,Äôs uncomfortable. But it is what it is.”

“I will not recommend people with families and kids to pursue a PhD at UTD because it is extremely difficult to bear expenses of a family with even one child currently in Dallas.”

“Academically it's a very good institution, so I would love to. But the city is very expensive in comparison to our stipend which makes our life difficult. Because PhD itself is a very stressful task, along with that we have TA duties, extensive lab work. If we take stress about our financial situation along with this, it makes very difficult to focus on work. Financially I struggle everyday. I don't think of having nutritious meal, rather I think to get cheap food. So considering my own situation financially, I won't.”

“Honestly no, due to the fact that students are not paid a liveable wage and prospective students will have to be financially dependent on others for years despite having full-time employment that

contractually prevents us from seeking outside employment to supplement the university's poverty level wages."

"I would warn them about the expenses in this city. So that they can think about it if they have multiple PhD assistantship offers."

Section 3: Work experience of TA/RA/GA

In this section, we focus on survey questions pertaining to the work experience of TA/RA/GAs.

S3A: Survey question: **How many hours a week do you work as a TA/RA/GA (round up to the nearest hour)?**

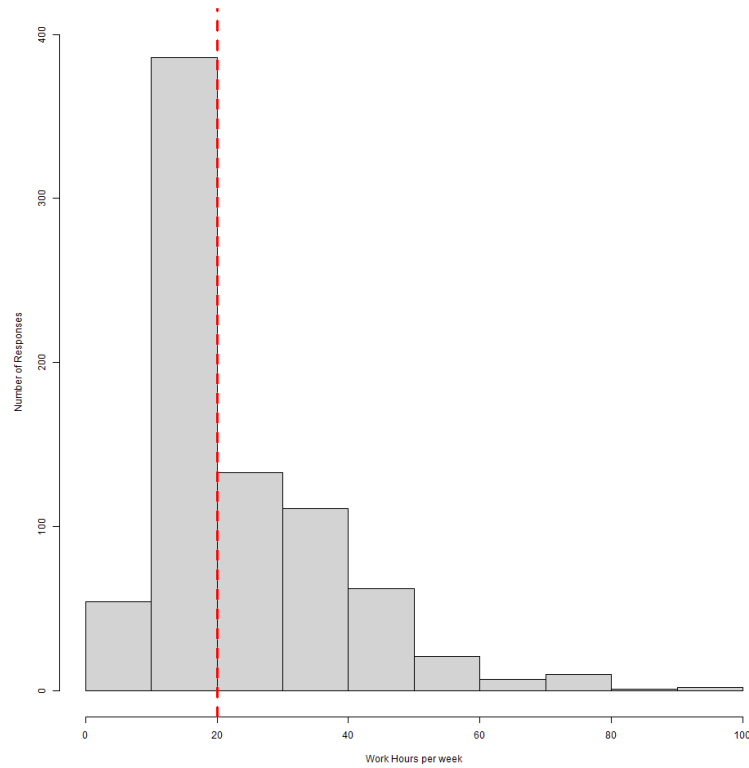


Figure 3.1: Hours Worked by TA/RA/GA per Week

We further broke down the responses by school, producing the following box plot of **Work hours per week by School**. The red dashed line refers to the work hours specified in the TA/RA/GA contract.

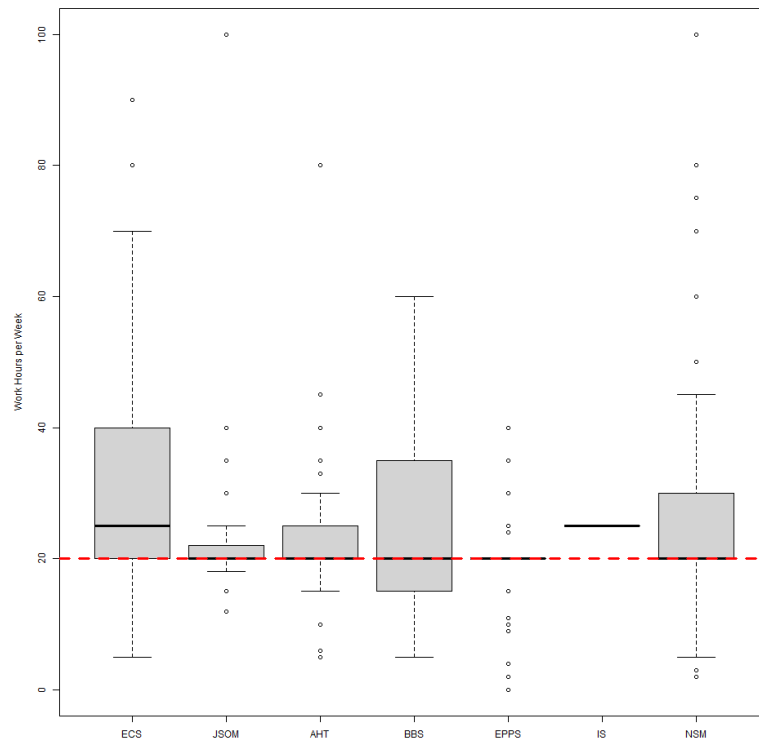


Figure 3.2: Hours Worked by TA/RA/GA per Week by School

A total of 347 (44%) TA/RA/GAs reported working over 20 hours per week. From the breakdown by the school, we see that those who work more than the contractual hours are mostly ECS, BBS, and NSM students. This is in direct contrast with the stipend data (see S1D) where on average ECS, BBS, and NSM students are paid significantly lower than JSOM students.

S3B: Survey question: **Based on your TA/RA/GA experience, do the amount of hours you work exceed the amount of hours prescribed by your stipend contract (be as specific as possible)?**

Two students left this question unanswered, but from the responses we see that a majority (70%) reported to working greater than their contract hours. In the survey responses, numerous individuals commented that during exam periods, they work additional hours for tasks such as grading and proctoring exams.

Table 3.1: Responses to Work Hours Exceeding Stipend Contract

Work Hours Exceed	Number of Responses
No	234 (30%)
Sometimes	250 (32%)
Yes	302 (38%)

Due to the several comments provided, we are unable to mention all of the responses here without affecting readability. Hence, we have mentioned some of the responses from each category. For your reference, the entire comments provided are mentioned at the end of the report in the Appendix section.

“There are times like exam weeks where between proctoring, grading and workshops, and preparing for the workshops, it is above 20hours”

“Depending on which classes I am assigned to teach and grade. Grading exams can be hectic because sometimes I have to grade almost 2000 papers (one question each).”

“Fall 2022 I taught a class of 70 students and my workload was about 35 hrs per week. Semesters I am the TA for the professor it can range from the contracted 20 to 25 hrs/wk depending on duties and class size.”

“I sometimes need to work extra hours when grading deadlines are close”

“Based on the preparations required for the labs and the exam period, the work hours exceed the contract prescribed hours”

“I have developed clinical anxiety because I have to work extra hours just to make instructors happy.”

Section 4: Academic experience of TA/RA/GA

This section deals with survey questions relating to the academic life of TAs/RAs/GAs.

Survey Question S4A: **How many hours a week do you study (round up the nearest hour)?**

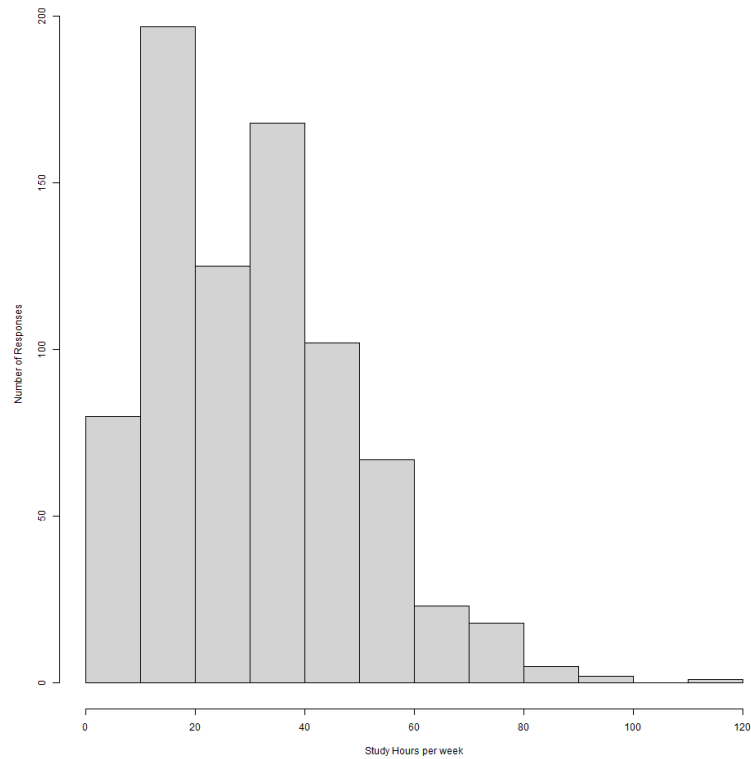


Figure 4.1: Responses to Study Hours per Week

We provide a breakdown of **Study hours per week by school**.

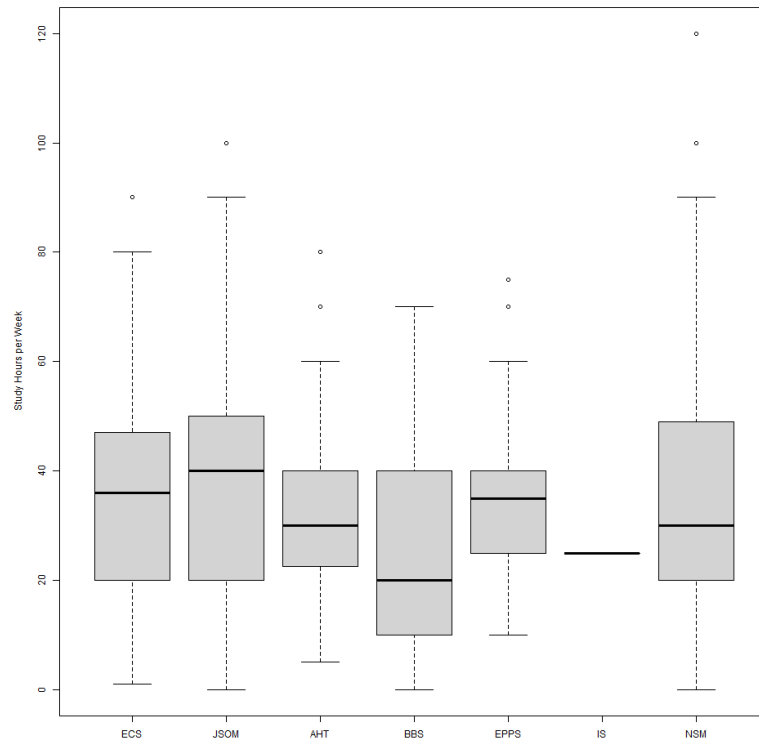


Figure 4.2: Breakdown of Study Hours per Week by School

The range of weekly study hours by TAs/RAs/GAs goes from 0-120 hours. However, the tendency shows that most PhD students' study between 10 to 50 hours per week.

Survey Question S4B: **Has your financial situation ever affected your academic productivity?**

Table 4.1: Responses to Financial Circumstances Affecting Academic Productivity

Response	Number of responses
No	242 (31.6%)
Yes	523 (68.4%)

Survey Question S4C: **If your monthly stipend from the University of Texas at Dallas were to increase, would it allow you to be more academically productive?**

From the responses, we see that an overwhelming majority of respondents (97.4%) indicated that a stipend increase will improve their academic productivity.

Table 4.2: Responses to Stipend Increase Improving Academic Productivity

Response	Number of responses
No	20 (2.6%)
Yes	745 (97.4%)

Section 5: Wellbeing of TA/RA/GA

This section presents survey questions addressing the overall wellbeing of TA/RA/GA.

S5A: Survey Question: **Have you been/Are you worried about your financial situation?**

Out of all respondents, 23 left this question blank. From students who provided a response, we see that 95% have at some point faced financial stress.

Table 5.1: Respondents' Outlook on Financial Situation

Response	Number of responses
No	39 (5%)
Sometimes	189 (25%)
Yes	537 (70%)

Those who selected “Sometimes” as a response had the option to further elaborate by text. Below are a select few comments.

“Sometime, I think I should quit from the PhD when I think I have to struggle for 4 more years”

“Every day I am worried about money, and want to graduate as soon as possible to get a job”

“I am always worried about my financial situation as I have dependents with me.”

“I moved from Northside apartments (overpriced!) to University Village to save money. Rent increases were significant. TA/RA's should be offered UV apartments either free or at a discount.”

S5B: Survey Question: **Are you happy about your living conditions? If not, why?**

The responses to this survey question were text based, and so we analyzed them by separating them into three categories: Satisfied, Neutral, and Not satisfied. The results are given below:

Table 5.2: Responses to Contentment of Living Conditions

Response Type	Number of responses
Satisfied	236 (33.6%)
Neutral	59 (8.4%)
Not satisfied	407 (58.0%)

S5D: Survey Question: **Based on your overall experience as a TA/RA/GA receiving a monthly stipend from the University of Texas at Dallas, would you recommend people to pursue a PhD at the University of Texas at Dallas?**

This was a text response question that received a total of 779 responses. 14 responses were deemed irrelevant and omitted as they did not contain a direct response to the question. The responses were analyzed by separating them into three categories: Yes, No, and Maybe/It depends. The results are given below:

Table 5.3: Respondents on whether they would recommend UTD based on stipend

Response Type	Number of responses
Yes	232 (30.3%)
No	395 (51.6%)
Maybe/It depends	138 (18.1%)

We provide below a select few comments that we believe to be representative of the general responses.

“Academically it's a very good institution, so I would. Also the exposure we get as a student here is what we used to dream of having in my home country. Professors are really helpful. But the city is very expensive in comparison to our stipend which makes our life difficult. Because PhD itself is a very stressful task, along with that we have TA duties, extensive lab work. If we take stress about our financial situation along with this, it makes very difficult to focus on work. So financially considering my own situation, I won't.”

“Based on my personal experience, yes, because I love my lab and have a great advisor. I love almost everything about UTD except for the financial stress I experience from the low stipend and high cost of living in Dallas.”

“Based on overall academic experience, with all the opportunities, Yes, the only drawback is the low stipend; which often causes unnecessary stress both in TA work and PhD research”

“Depends on how inclined they are to pursue a career in research. I wouldn't recommend it to most people largely due to the financial situation they would have to put themselves in.”

“Yes it's a wonderful environment and the academics are enriching, but again, I would tell them to reconsider if they are only financially dependent on the stipend. It's just very hard to live off of 1800 with the cost of living”

“yes the university is good and the work is high quality. Living expenses in Dallas are skyrocketing and it is hard to survive without a decent amount of savings as the stipend is not sufficient.”

“Yes, the overall experience outweighs the financial situation for many, however I believe UTD is missing out on good students who just can't afford it.”

“Yes. It's an amazing experience and institution but the pay is not enough to meet basic needs.”

“UTD is a great place but financial hardship made me tell my brother to change his mind and not come here.”

“Sure, aside from the financial constraints, UTD is a great institute to pursue a PhD.”

S5C: Survey Question: Would you like to make any other comments on your experiences at this university as a TA/RA/GA?

This was a text response question that received 470 responses. 99 responded ‘no’, 123 responses were omitted as they were deemed not useful in addressing the question or providing relevant information.

A total of 248 responses provided detailed feedback, which we categorized into nine distinct groups based on the response sentiment to offer a concise summary. It's worth noting that some comments could be classified under multiple categories if they relate to more than one topic. To avoid overwhelming readers with excessive information, we have highlighted the key findings by including only some of the feedback received in each category. It is important to emphasize that the comments presented are the unedited, raw feedback provided by the survey respondents.

Category 1: Good Experience – 32 responses

“I was fortunate to receive fellowship aid from the university this year which has helped alleviate financial stress substantially. I am worried for the coming years if I do not receive this extra support. Besides my financial situation I have really enjoyed my experience so far in research at UTD, and all faculty have been instrumental to my success.”

“Thank You for backing up qualified international students like me financially. You are helping those people who love education and academia, and this is so worthwhile. Even though there are sometimes financial problems and mindsets for me as a newcomer in this country and university, I appreciate all your financial and academic supports. I consider myself as a member of this community and I keep trying to study and work here energetically so that we all can improve as well. Thank you so much.”

“The inclusion of health insurance, SHIP, with student TA benefits is greatly appreciated”

Category 2: Increase Stipend – 235 responses

“Its been well documented that people with lower incomes tend to have poor health due to poor food habits and a general stress. I can attest to this from first hand experience. The prices of quality proteins and fresh produces has become unattainable with the current stipend. While this may seem innocuous now i believe it has disastrous consequences in the long term.”

“The stipend needs to increase to at least keep up with the increasing living expenses. My rent, for example, has gone up by 25% this year while my income has remained stagnant. I have had to use my savings from an internship to cover my living expenses.”

“UTD has a very good PhD and Grad course structure. Especially the research and learning opportunities are great in my discipline. But the overall stipend amount is less. It was even worse previously when had to pay for our health insurance. But, I believe a review of stipend amount is required given the inflation and these ever increasing living/house rent costs. An increment in stipend amount would surely make grad life experience better at UTD. Thanks for your consideration and reading this note.”

“I love teaching, but the expectations academically and for independent research are not reflected in the stipend. Some people are REALLY struggling with mental health as a result. I do odd jobs to make more money even though its not really allowed”

Category 3: Mixed Response – 47 responses

“Being a TA is great, but rent and groceries are skyrocketing (my rent has increased by 50% in the last two years) and our pay isn’t matching the rapid increase in cost of living”

“My boss is the best one I have ever had. I do everything I can for her, and the people who I work with. The faculty are amazing here. The administration is not.”

“Everything else is fine and I like helping students to learn. An increase in stipend of 15-20% would offset the cumulative inflation we’ve seen since 2019. Either way I’m going to finish my PhD, but you guys either need to allow us to earn extra money by getting a 2nd job or increase the stipend to offset the cost of living increase. Thank you for listening.”

Category 4: Housing & Rent – 39 responses

“My academics and mental wellbeing have suffered a lot in the past from having to live in really unsafe areas to afford lower rent in the past. I'm thankful to live in a safer place now, but I've had to pull out loans to afford this, and I also have to commute to school. It's even harder now with how high cost of living is in Dallas. I think it would help greatly to increase stipends enough to at least compensate for rises in rent around Dallas in the past 2 years. Thank yall for putting this survey together and showing interest in our financial wellbeing.”

“The amount of TA/RA stipend that is provided by UTD is not enough to lead a decent life with a family currently in Dallas. From house rent to groceries, all prices have gone up, but our stipends have remained the same. I am always worried about my credit card bill and it significantly affects my academic performance and motivation. This is particular true for me as an International Student who is not authorized to work elsewhere apart from the TA/RA responsibilities. I am worried about incurring a credit card debt without being able to live in a safe environment. If my stipend was increased it would be easier for me to pay off my credit card debt and I would also move to living somewhere decent with my family.”

Category 5: Workload – 42 responses

“A PhD who is a TA, should also work on his/her own research which might even takes more than TA work. So combined that's lots if work unseen by the department.”

“The work level is extremely inconsistent between TAs and RAs, with some students receiving only minimal workloads while others are forced to deal with so much work that it actively interferes with the reasons we joined the program in the first place.”

“The working burden for TA in Mathematics department is very heavy. Some of the TA spend 30-40 hours every week on TA work”

Category 6: Department Stipend – 11 responses

“There's no consensus on how much a TA/RA is paid even under the same school; All TA/RAs should be at least paid a min wage across UTD.”

“I feel that the stipend for all the schools should be same atleast even if you are not planning to increase the stipend. I know friends in Physics department who had more stipend than mine (Not because of the qaulifier exam etc but the base stipend). This should not be the case since living expenses are similar and one area of work is not superior than other arguable. I guess my department (EE) increases the stipend after passing different exams during PhD but those exams are usually attempted 1 year before the graduation normally which is not useful. Besides stipend is there for living and it should not decided based on passing an exam. If we use that reasoning and decide stipend based on the value of the person determined by reaching a milestone, job market is more favorable rather than persuing PhD”

Category 7: Stipend Contract – 8 responses

“I am grateful for the fully funded tuition, stipend and health insurance. I think it is generous, all things considered. I think the part that gets challenging is the gray area around outside work. If fully funded students were more openly allowed to work outside of the TA/RA/GA position as a way to supplement the stipend, that would help. I am aware that this can be appealed, but it still seems a little uncertain as to what exactly is allowed regarding outside work. It also seems odd that it has to be approved, which adds a layer of uncertainty about what is/isn't allowed. If the stipend amount were increased, that would decrease the need to work. So, I would be good with either option, but the stipend-only criteria has created a financial hardship for my family that does cause stress and uncertainty. Otherwise, I have been very happy with my experience at a TA.”

“I appreciate the stipend, fully-funded tuition and health insurance. However, the financial situation is a hardship and causes stress. If students were allowed multiple TA/RA/GA positions or allowed to more openly work outside of the program, that would help. If the stipend increases, that would be great news. I understand that outside work can be considered, but that still seems like a little bit of an uncertainty given the need for approval and the original messaging that work would not be allowed. Individual part-time work would be very easy to maintain and would help financially.”

Category 8: Well-being – 59 responses

“Due to inflation, the stipend of students are really unfair. The stipend received from the university can only be spent on house rent. Does the student not need money to provide food and entertainment? Doesn't a student need to buy warm clothes in the cold winter?”

“I love UTD. But the stipend amount makes it very difficult to cover normal expenses and not have financial worry a concern.”

“While I appreciate UT Dallas' concern for the stipend and financial well-being of Ph.D. students, I am seriously concerned about my financial security. The biggest concern I have is about the time when I might get sick or an unfortunate accident might happen to one of us. How will we take care of these costs

in such a case? UT Dallas is one of the best R1 universities in the US, so I think it would be great if the university raised its Ph.D. students' stipend so that we could save a certain percentage of our stipend and be more productive. I appreciate you taking the time to conduct this survey and considering our opinions."

Category 9: Other – 49 responses

"If conferences and other academic experiences are highly recommended for funded students, then full reimbursement needs to be provided. There is not enough money being provided for all the conferences that are highly encouraged"

"The university system is really good but stipends need to be increased. Moreover, came to know that new comer are getting more money than us who joined 2019, same steams subject, same department. On my opinion salary should be fair based on our experience or be equal."

"Hope the increasing cost of living is taken into account for stipend revisions. If TA/RA assignments are made earlier, then it would reduce the stress about time without income."

"I wish there was more input into which TA assignment I am given. I have been a TA for a lab classes for 3 years now, I would like to become a lecture TA. I believe my seniority as a TA should allow me to have some day into my TA assignment. TA should also be able to earn bonuses for proctoring and grading exams outside their assigned course. For example, I have been a TA for organic chemistry lab since I started at UTD, but have had to proctor and grade organic chemistry lecture exams every single semester. This is unfair. I do more work with no compensation."

Section 6: Summary and GSA Recommendation

We would also like to reiterate that the stipend amount issue is directly reflected in the PhD students' experience as a TA/RA/GA. Of the 522 respondents to S4C, only 13% indicated an overall positive experience. More responses (24%) indicated poor well-being due to low stipends, while the majority (95%) was a plea for a stipend increase. 97.4% of respondents indicated that an increase in stipend would allow them to be more productive as well. This makes the strong case that a stipend increase for TAs/RAs/GAs would lead to better academic results for UTD.

Based on the available data, it is evident that the current stipend amount is a pressing concern for PhD students. The median stipend received is \$1900, and the median monthly expenses, including rent, car insurance, car parking permit, gas/transportation, and food payments, amount to \$1855. However, this median expense figure is an underestimate due to the exclusion of other significant expenses that were covered by the survey but not considered in the median expense (highlighted in S2H), and possibly other expenses that were not covered by the survey.

Even without considering these additional expenses, the remaining stipend of \$45 is not enough to cover unexpected costs or emergencies. This could lead to financial stress, impacting the mental health and well-being of students. This was evident in the comments received by the affected PhD TA/RA/GA students. Therefore, it is crucial to address this issue and consider increasing the stipend amount to ensure that PhD students can lead a financially stable life while pursuing their studies.

Figure 6.1 represent the approximate expenses incurred by TA/RA/GA at UTD. The dashed line represents the median expenses per month, not considering the expenses highlighted in S2H.

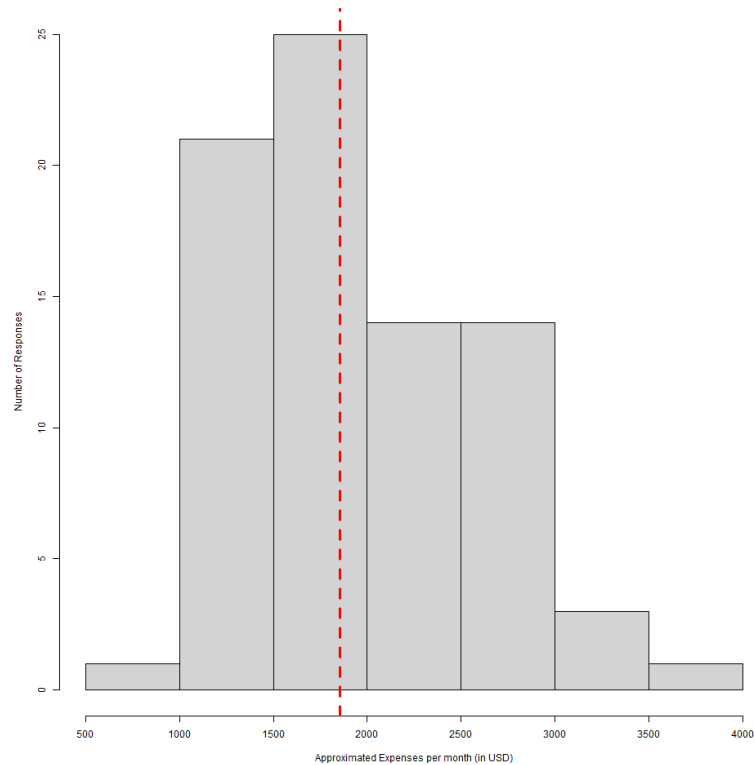


Figure 6.1: Approximate Expenses per month

The survey results indicate that a majority of the respondents believe that a stipend increase would greatly benefit them. As you are aware, TAs, RAs, and GAs play a crucial role in supporting the academic mission of our institution. However, their current stipend rates do not reflect the increasing cost of living, which has been exacerbated by inflation in recent years. This puts a financial burden on these employees, which negatively impacts their overall well-being and academic productivity. Therefore, we recommend increasing the stipend amount **to at least \$2500 per month** for these categories of employees. Doing so would not only help address the financial challenges that TAs, RAs, and GAs face, but it would also boost their morale and improve their overall well-being, which would positively impact their academic productivity.

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TA/RA/GA Stipend Committee

Mithin Nehrubabu (Chair) – Survey Report, Data Processing & Analysis, Outreach

Bhanu Garg – Survey Report, Data Processing, Analysis, and Representation

Nimisha Pocharam – Survey Report, Data Processing & Analysis

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Azharul Islam – Survey

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Appendix

The following is an exhaustive list of the text responses we received for crucial questions.

Survey Question: **Based on your TA/RA/GA experience, do the amount of hours you work exceed the amount of hours prescribed by your stipend contract (be as specific as possible)?**

Text responses of those who selected “Sometimes:”

Overworking during Exam weeks:

- “Specifically during exam periods, yes by far”*
- “Midterms/Finals/Projects”*
- “During exam weeks I work excess hours grading, proctoring exams”*
- “When proctoring and grading exam papers.”*
- “Midterm and final week”*
- “During exam grading not weekly”*
- “There are times like exam weeks where between proctoring, grading and workshops, and preparing for the workshops, it is above 20hours”*
- “When I must correct exam papers”*
- “Midterm and finals week”*
- “Mostly during exam weeks”*
- “during midterm/final weeks”*
- “Around midterm and final exams”*
- “during exam grading”*
- “During final and midterm the time is absolutely out of the range”*
- “Depending on which classes I am assigned to teach and grade. Grading exams can be hectic because sometimes I have to grade almost 2000 papers (one question each).”*
- “During exams”*
- “During exams specifically we need to work extra. Extra classes took my most of the weekends. I barely got time to study for my own classes.”*
- “During exams”*
- “During the examination, while grading.”*
- “Last semester, I have 2 Lecture sections (35+/each) and 1 grading section (75+ student) I have to grade PHW, and quiz. For Lecture section, 4 H class +1 H preparation+6 H grading. For grading section, 6H for PHw+4 H for quiz. So total 21 hours at least. And in exam time it increased due to proctoring and exam grading!!!!”*
- “During finals I always was overloaded by 20+ hours”*
- “Finals grading sometimes takes me over.”*
- “During regular weeks, hours of work are often less than prescribed hours. However, weeks which include a lot of grading of assignments, quizzes, exams, the work hours tend to exceed the prescribed hours. Furthermore, it also depends on the course for which we are TAs, some courses demand more work, others demand minimal work”*
- “Based on the preparations required for the labs and the exam period, the work hours exceed the contract prescribed hours”*

Overworking to meet deadlines:

- “Depends on conference deadlines and priorities.”*
- “depends on the deadline and research”*
- “As a TA, depends on grading deadlines. As an RA it depends on research progress but the extra hours are mostly self motivated and not enforced”*
- “I sometimes need to work extra hours when grading deadlines are close”*
- “Depends on deadlines”*
- “Depends on whether there is a deadline for a conference”*

Overworking due to large classes:

- “Last semester, I have 2 Lecture sections (35+/each) and 1 grading section (75+ student) I have to grade PHW, and quiz. For Lecture section, 4 H class +1 H preparation+6 H grading. For grading section, 6H for PHw+4 H for quiz. So total 21 hours at least. And in exam time it increased due to proctoring and exam grading!!!!”*

"Due to the student's number and the heavy assignments , quizzes"

"Fall 2022 I taught a class of 70 students and my workload was about 35 hrs per week. Semesters I am the TA for the professor it can range from the contracted 20 to 25 hrs/wk depending on duties and class size."

"It depends on the number of student in the class"

Other:

"A few weeks"

"Depends on the experiments. But mostly exceeds."

"15 hours more"

"20"

"depends on the lab"

"When grading papers, discussion boards, and other miscellaneous assignments"

"Sometimes scheduling/practicalities require longer work weeks"

"The amount of TA hours are within the limit of the contract, if we are excluding hours spent on research"

"In the fall 2022 semester, I averaged 10 hours per week. But, I've worked 15-20 hours per week in past semesters when working with different professors."

"During maintainance"

"It depends on the week, sometimes experiments take a long time and sometimes you can't do anything because your program is running."

"During regular weeks, hours of work are often less than prescribed hours. However, weeks which include a lot of grading of assignments, quizzes, exams, the work hours tend to exceed the prescribed hours. Furthermore, it also depends on the course for which we are TAs, some courses demand more work, others demand minimal work"

"End of semester only"

"During the end of the semesters"

"20 more hours"

"Based on the preparations required for the labs and the exam period, the work hours exceed the contract prescribed hours"

"20hours in the contract"

"If we're taping out a chip or we have a lot of pressure to get results, that 30 goes up to 70, 80, maybe higher."

"Some courses/labs are significantly more advanced than others and require more preparation & more grading"

"Depends on the week, some are extremely busy, others are less so"

"Academic work is a marathon of sprints. "

"20 hours/week on my contract, but I work 70 h/week in average. "

"During busy weeks of course. "

"I have developed clinical anxiety because I have to work extra hours just to make instructors happy. "

"I'm usually in the lab close to 8 hours a day and then work from home if I need to write a paper. "

"50% of the time"

"It depends on the person I am TAing for. Sometimes the time commitment easily falls within 20 hours. However, some professors aren't organized and it makes it more difficult to maintain a 20 hour max work load"

"40 hours over contract"

"in some courses"

"When I teach a course in the Summer I work a lot more but my stipend didn't change."

"It exceeded in 2021 not in 2022"

"On most weeks the amount of work hours is below contract hours, though when there has been a large assignment for a large class the amount of hours can balloon with grading it. "

"Almost doubled. 40 hours of RA work for a 20 hour stipend. "4 to 6 hours more"

"At the end of the semester."

"The work hours always exceed the amount of hours you work. If you work as a TA, these hours exceed even more. They said 40 hours but clearly people are working at least 50 hours a week, not including work from home time and over the weekend."

"Rare, but it can happen. "

"While grading"

"I'm RA. The research projects require long hours. "

"My hours range from 10-30 depending on the week."

"There certain weeks and days that gets more hectic"

Survey Question: **Would you like to make any other comments on your experiences at this university as a TA/RA/GA?**

An overall good experience:

"Overall, good"

"Has been a good experience so far."

"Nope. I am grateful for what I receive! For consistent overtime, getting paid more would be helpful."

"I am grateful for the fully funded tuition, stipend and health insurance. I think it is generous, all things considered. I think the part that gets challenging is the gray area around outside work. If fully funded students were more openly allowed to work outside of the TA/RA/GA position as a way to supplement the stipend, that would help. I am aware that this can be appealed, but it still seems a little uncertain as to what exactly is allowed regarding outside work. It also seems odd that it has to be approved, which adds a layer of uncertainty about what is/isn't allowed. If the stipend amount were increased, that would decrease the need to work. So, I would be good with either option, but the stipend-only criteria has created a financial hardship for my family that does cause stress and uncertainty. Otherwise, I have been very happy with my experience at a TA."

"My experience as TA is great!"

"I love the work culture."

"The team and faculty are very welcoming and supportive. The financial situation only seems concerning because of the hike in housing prices and pending student loans that student may have."

"Before you waive the student's insurance the financial situation was tough but now it looks better"

"I am happy with the overall growth of UTD. I feel proud when I see my previous colleagues are doing wonderful in their career. I do hope I can also make progress in my research work without worrying about unwanted issues in future."

"the addition of health insurance made the program much more competitive and is greatly appreciated"

"It's fine"

"Overall it's rich and great experience"

"Paying the student health insurance from last semester has been a great help"

"I love people I work with including my professor"

"Professors are very nice."

"Professors are great to work with"

"UTD is one of the best institutions of the USA."

"Thank You for backing up qualified international students like me financially. You are helping those people who love education and academia, and this is so worthwhile. Even though there are sometimes financial problems and mindsets for me as a newcomer in this country and university, I appreciate all your financial and academic supports. I consider myself as a member of this community and I keep trying to study and work here energetically so that we all can improve as well. Thank you so much."

"I love the group I work with"

"I love UT Dallas and I enjoy my TA job. It's fun."

"Good research environment"

"Despite all the difficulties, I feel extremely lucky and fortunate to be able to study at UTD. The faculty of the university is extremely professional and the staff are wonderfully helpful. I love the courses that I have taken so far, and the classes I teach. I've got brilliant students and teaching them proves to be extremely rewarding for me. All in all, I love my university!"

"I was fortunate to receive fellowship aid from the university this year which has helped alleviate financial stress substantially. I am worried for the coming years if I do not receive this extra support. Besides my financial situation I have really enjoyed my experience so far in research at UTD, and all faculty have been instrumental to my success."

"Great university for academics and career"

"Great Team and Great Professors"

"The inclusion of health insurance, SHIP, with student TA benefits is greatly appreciated"

"not specifically, but the experience is worth for future career."

"It's been great so far. However, I do have support at home - so I may be more biased about the experience because I am blessed enough to not feel the additional financial stress."

"it is very good experience so far"

"My overall experience was good, only sometimes we had to work a lot. More than I have spend time on my own classes."

"Pursuing a PhD is hard. Financially I probably isn't worth it for return on investment or living standards compared to industry, but I want to work in academia so I'm just happy to not be taking on debt to pursue my degree."

"It was a pleasant experience"

An overall mixed opinion:

"It is really good. But it will be great if the stipend were to increase."

"Being a TA is great, but rent and groceries are skyrocketing (my rent has increased by 50% in the last two years) and our pay isn't matching the rapid increase in cost of living"

"The experience is good, but with a better stipend it could be so much better."

"I am really grateful for the financial support UTD gave, but the recent inflation makes the situation little difficult sometimes"

"While I appreciate the stipend and my overall financial aid, both fail to take into consideration the cost of living (in particular rent, utilities, etc.) of Dallas, especially given our current economy. While the financial aid and stipend does help to alleviate the pressure, the fact that I can't take additional employment outside of my TAship if I want to have my full tuition paid ensures that I will have to take out loans if I want to cover my living expenses."

"I really like it but the stipend has not increased while inflation has gone up they need to account for it"

"It is great experience academically but financially the situation is a little tight especially for me since I have a loan to pay off and I almost make next to no savings."

"The research work is really good. Since rent has gone up, I feel stipend could be increased a bit, after conducting a survey of rent increase"

"It's been great but it can be better if I don't have to constantly worry about going broke and borrowing money every month."

"The work atmosphere is very student friendly and comfortable however the stipend is really an issue considering food prices and rents are really going up and stuff used for day to day activities have become expensive."

"Working experience is very enjoyable. Stipend can be increased."

"I think the university is doing better to supply students with the resources they need. However, more needs to be done (such as waiving or discounting on-campus housing)."

"The experience there is good and fun, but the stipend amount isn't enough"

"I do not believe I need the stipend boost but the conversations in our lab reflect a desire for an increased stipend."

"With rising costs of inflation it's been hard to survive on the stipend would kindly request an increase. Further the rent has been increased for the next academic year it would be hard to survive on the current salary."

"Overall good; But, current salary should be increased; Very difficult to survive in Dallas with current salary if you have a spouse & children"

"TA and RA experience at UTD has been fun except for the rising expense. There should be some consideration to the living expenses of Dallas when stipend is fixed"

"The academic leadership has been fantastic but I question whether it's worth it due to the debt and financial pitfall I have found myself in."

"I'm having fun. The stipend does give me just a little bit of money to let me do research and save a small portion, but it's only just enough. I do essentially live check-to-check."

"Overall, I'm grateful for the kind scholarship from UTD, a little upgrade of the current monthly allowance will definitely help to improve our academic performance."

"My boss is the best one I have ever had. I do everything I can for her, and the people who I work with. The faculty are amazing here. The administration is not."

"My experience in the classroom has been good, but the compensation is not ideal. Additionally, I'm disturbed by the requests to TA additional classes without any changes to the monthly stipend."

"Everything else is fine and I like helping students to learn. An increase in stipend of 15-20% would offset the cumulative inflation we've seen since 2019. Either way I'm going to finish my PhD, but you guys either need to allow us to earn extra money by getting a 2nd job or increase the stipend to offset the cost of living increase. Thank you for listening."

"It is a lot of work and it is stressful but maybe it is supposed to be."

"After one semester at UTD, I have loved being a TA. I would like to not have to continue taking out federal loans to support myself for future years, so I can focus less on financial instability and more on my progress in my PhD program"

"TA is amazing but if we can't adjunct at other universities we need to have more income"

"Working conditions are good, but we really need increase."

"For most of my time at UTD, my stipend was even less than it is now. I'm grateful for the increase in stipend and also the addition of health insurance benefits. I would gladly teach more courses as a TA or take on extra responsibilities if it meant an increase in pay, simply because I need the money to live and support my family. While my tuition is paid for by scholarships, I'm still in debt charging my living expenses on credit cards and having to pay this debt upon graduation. I feel like I've made a huge financial sacrifice and placed my family in a financial hole that will take years to get out of."

"my supervisor has been extremely helpful and supportive so that makes me feel safe in my research. I had some savings from my time in Hong Kong so that's helping me but it will run out before I even get close to graduating. Plus taxes take quite a bit at the end of the year when I file."

"Great professional experience, insufficient financial aid."

"Working conditions are really good but the amount of stipend is really less. It barely meets my needs and I'm hardly able to save anything"

"As a PhD student I am grateful that my classes are covered and (more recently) the health insurance is covered. However, when compared to my colleagues who graduated undergrad and went to industry, even the minimum amount they are paid is 1.5x our stipend+classes. This is ridiculous. We are unable to save/plan for our own futures because we do not make enough. Yet, we are in the lab for 40,50,60,80+ hours a week producing for the university. Without graduate students to complete research projects or assist PIs in writing grants, there would be no research at UTD. Please help us!"

"The academic experience has been great, I learned a lot in here but what makes life hard as a graduate student is the cost of living. You can not pay your taxes as an international student at all, you are paying maximum tax rate at the same time you are not receiving enough to cover, food, housing, car, insurance, and all other necessary cost of living."

"Actually compared to my other friends in other universities I'm saving much less than them. I don't say it's bad but comparing to other students we're saving less for special situations."

"I like it, but we work way more than the established hours. We really need an stipend increase"

"I do enjoy my job but having more financial freedom would significantly improve my experience here"

"I have had an overall positive experience as an RA at utd. However, an increase in the monthly stipend would be great"

"The only problem I have is a financial problem other than that I have good experiences at UTD"

"I love UTD. But the stipend amount makes it very difficult to cover normal expenses and not have financial worry a concern."

"Although finances are difficult, I am thankful for the opportunity. I wouldn't be able to get a degree without it."

"I love the job itself, but the pay is unrealistic considering the current economic environment. I could make more working part-time somewhere else."

"I would recommend UT Dallas to anyone who wants to work as an RA if the stipend increases."

"Sometime we're overloaded with lots of tasks as a TA, however, overall, my personal experience is good so far."

"It's been great but I wish the wages were increased"

"While I appreciate UT Dallas' concern for the stipend and financial well-being of Ph.D. students, I am seriously concerned about my financial security. The biggest concern I have is about the time when I might get sick or an unfortunate accident might happen to one of us. How will we take care of these costs in such a case? UT Dallas is one of the best R1 universities in the US, so I think it would be great if the university raised its Ph.D. students' stipend so that we could save a certain percentage of our stipend and be more productive. I appreciate you taking the time to conduct this survey and considering our opinions."

"I don't need more money, but with the rent prices in Dallas, I think the stipend should be higher for the people in my cohort that rely on the stipend for everything."

"department is helpful and also the supervisor. Some days I worry if I'll have enough money to finish the PhD."

"Many weekends I don't go out just because of the cost would be too high to uber back and forth + the expenses of the outing itself. Easily surpasses 100 dollar a night."

Rent and housing:

"The housing is insanely high in Dallas, The stipend needs to be reconsidered."

"Being a TA is great, but rent and groceries are skyrocketing (my rent has increased by 50% in the last two years) and our pay isn't matching the rapid increase in cost of living"

"Inflation is hitting me the hardest with huge increase in rent and electricity. I would definitely recommend increasing my stipend. "

"Please prioritize married students for on campus housing. They are shorter in the budget "

"While I appreciate the stipend and my overall financial aid, both fail to take into consideration the cost of living (in particular rent, utilities, etc.) of Dallas, especially given our current economy. While the financial aid and stipend does help to alleviate the pressure, the fact that I can't take additional employment outside of my TAship if I want to have my full tuition paid ensures that I will have to take out loans if I want to cover my living expenses."

"Please provide hoisting option for PhD students and TA/RA/GA"

"On Campus housing can be prioritized for Ph.D applicants as that will save money and time."

"There should be annual stipend increases that match inflation. The university should extend some kind of housing benefits for TA/RA/GA's. Benefits to acquire/maintain work laptops would be very helpful."

"The research work is really good. Since rent has gone up, I feel stipend could be increased a bit, after conducting a survey of rent increase "

"stipend amount should be increased this year to reflect a huge increase in cost of living in richardson/plano area. Myself and many of my peers had their rent increased several hundred dollars on resigning our contracts this year."

"The work atmosphere is very student friendly and comfortable however the stipend is really an issue considering food prices and rents are really going up and stuff used for day to day activities have become expensive."

"The stipend needs to increase to at least keep up with the increasing living expenses. My rent, for example, has gone up by 25% this year while my income has remained stagnant. I have had to use my savings from an internship to cover my living expenses."

"The team and faculty are very welcoming and supportive. The financial situation only seems concerning because of the hike in housing prices and pending student loans that student may have."

"I can't bring my wife and child because I can't to afford rent an apartment for them. "

"I think the university is doing better to supply students with the resources they need. However, more needs to be done (such as waiving or discounting on-campus housing)."

"My academics and mental wellbeing have suffered a lot in the past from having to live in really unsafe areas to afford lower rent in the past. I'm thankful to live in a safer place now, but I've had to pull out loans to afford this, and I also have to commute to school. It's even harder now with how high cost of living is in Dallas. I think it would help greatly to increase stipends enough to at least compensate for rises in rent around Dallas in the past 2 years. Thank yall for putting this survey together and showing interest in our financial wellbeing."

"UTD has a very good PhD and Grad course structure. Especially the research and learning opportunities are great in my discipline. But the overall stipend amount is less. It was even worse previously when had to pay for our health insurance. But, I believe a review of stipend amount is required given the inflation and these ever increasing living/house rent costs. An increment in stipend amount would surely make grad life experience better at UTD."

"Thanks for your consideration and reading this note."

"Until last year, we weren't even getting university sponsored health insurance. Taking those 330\$ odd installments off my monthly paychecks helps a bit, but the apartment complexes, and a large thereof, increasing the rents exhorbitantly makes me want to get out of UTD sooner than I would like, as an ideal, efficient researcher z"

"Not paid enough to match inflation and save for a mode of transport. The college should at least provide affordable housing to PhD Students and benefits like free parking to make surviving easier"

"due to inflation the house rents along the UTD shuttle route has increased by 43%, but the stipend did not. "

"It's not enough, but I am primarily responsible for my woes. But my colleagues have problems too, with a 1 bedroom apartment in Texas costing about 1.5k"

"The amount of TA/RA stipend that is provided by UTD is not enough to lead a decent life with a family currently in Dallas. From house rent to groceries, all prices have gone up, but our stipends have remained the same. I am always worried about my credit card bill and it significantly affects my academic performance and motivation. This is particular true for me as an International Student who is not authorized to work elsewhere apart from the TA/RA responsibilities. I am worried about incurring a credit card debt without being able to live in a safe environment. If my stipend was increased it would be easier for me to pay off my credit card debt and I would also move to living somewhere decent with my family."

"I believe that regarding the high cost of life, including rent, food, utility, etc., our stipend should increase by at least 50% to make us relieved from the financial stress. With all the financial hardship it is really hard to concentrate on the rigorous phd program. As a 1st year student, it has been really shocking to me to face this discrepancy between my wage and real costs, and I am under debt right now and I do not see any improvement in my life for the rest of this program which will be another 4-5 years . I believe that all PhD students deserve to have a peace of mind and not to worry about their basic needs. But unfortunately, we are struggling badly. I really hope that the school significantly increases our wage, otherwise this problems will force many talents to choose not to pursue PhD anymore."

"I spoke in depth about this with junior faculty and she said that I should in no way be considering leaving early for financial concerns and that I should stay as long as possible to create the best resume possible and publish in order to receive an R1 job. I am not able to do that. I have taken student loans and credit card debt and must leave as soon as possible. I have already made financial accommodations including buying a cheaper car and I am moving in with roommates just to afford food without further debt."

"a stipend increase is important; what would be better is on campus graduate housing guaranteed by stipend; spent a lot of time searching for cheaper places and applied to on campus housing but got an offer too late into the semester!"

"Please increase the stipend as the rents have drastically increased "

"lately, rents increased, grocery prices increased, and insurance has increased. RA's salary should increase accordingly"

"I do think we need some support about housing, parking, and other financial support. "

"the wage is too low and cannot cover my spending every month. The wage can only cover my rent, and worried about financial situation everyday."

"Consider providing housing subsidy as the rent increases dramatically these years after covid"

"Given the increases in housing and cost of living expenses over the past couple of years, the stipend does not cover as much as it did initially."

"Parking should be free/affordable for PhD students, and there should be more capacity in UV housing"

"The PhD stipend has not changed since 2016, during the same time, the rent has doubled. It is unfair to not match rent inflation at the very least."

"I think the monthly stipend was good for two years ago, however right now the rent and monthly money that we pay for food have increased dramatically over these two years "

"The only problem is in Dallas, 2000 per month (before tax) is too low to have a good living situation. I hope school could offer cheaper housing options for TA/RA. One more thing, I hope TA also could access the department copy room because sometimes we need help Professor print exams sheets or homework."

"The pay does not allow us to stay in a safe housing unit. It is also difficult to get a required device. Most of us need to save up for several months before we could afford a laptop and in the meantime we use UTD lab computers when our's is broken. This makes attending online meetings and such difficult. "

"It's just that rents have gone up and being a PhD student you can't share an apartment with many people and it's difficult to bear the rent. But being RA with my prof has been a learning experience for me"

"You guys need to consider the rent on a 1 bedroom in the local area when you decide on stipends. The "lower rents" are often in places that are known for mold/crime, so you should ask students what a 1 bedroom costs where they live"

"I don't need more money, but with the rent prices in Dallas, I think the stipend should be higher for the people in my cohort that rely on the stipend for everything."

Department Stipend:

"departments receive disproportionate stipend funding, an equilibrium would be appreciated."

"There's no consensus on how much a TA/RA is paid even under the same school; All TA/RAs should be at least paid a min wage across UTD."

"Huge workload as TA, low pay and unpaid hours for proctoring and additional grading related work was not counted on our letter. it affected my research quality and service. I can not recommend math phd to other student. "

"I feel that the stipend for all the schools should be the same at least even if you are not planning to increase the stipend. I know friends in Physics department who had more stipend than mine (Not because of the qualifier exam etc but the base stipend). This should not be the case since living expenses are similar and one area of work is not superior than other arguable. I guess my department (EE) increases the stipend after passing different exams during PhD but those exams are usually attempted 1 year before the graduation normally which is not useful. Besides stipend is there for living and it should not be decided based on passing an exam. If we use that reasoning and decide stipend based on the value of the person determined by reaching a milestone, job market is more favorable rather than pursuing PhD"

"Struggling for scraps and struggling to make my ends meet was the last thing I expected when I joined the PhD program at UTD. I knew the stipend was not great when I joined. However, I expected the stipend to increase based on the market inflation rates. Seems like at UTD, the costs do increase every year, but the stipend rarely does. In 7 years, the EE department increased the stipend once. By \$100. Even if I am grateful for that, it is nowhere close to helping the students allay their financial fears. I wonder how people with families even cope."

"I think that our department need to increase our stipend in order to make student focus on their own work only without any worry for their financial situation."

"Unfair. Stipend differs across schools"

"I understand that each school within the University brings in different amounts of money, however I think it would be in the benefit of all graduate students if the TA/RA/GA stipend is increased and the same for all graduate students in the University."

"We are contracted to work 20 hours a week. Department leadership turns around and says we will need to work 60-80 hours per week if we want to make it (and that we are expected to work & be on call at all times). If I had more money I would contact a lawyer. I have this all in writing. "

"I think that the EPPS Dean increased our stipends to \$2,000; however, my stipend did not change. It is important to talk to administration about how these decisions can be enforced and communicated clearly to program heads, faculty, and grad students. Next semester I will be a graduate instructor in EPPS, but my pay will not change---I think that's something to examine. I gave an answer of zero hours, as to how many hours of RA work I do. The project I'm assigned to has been delayed (so the answer is not a typo). "

"I would just like to say that often our work goes unappreciated. As a Math Department TA, we handle all the grading for the freshmen level math courses that are required. If we decide not to grade anymore, this school would be crippled, so please pay us more. We worked hard to get admitted to a PhD. We deserve better pay and more respect."

Stipend Contract:

"I am grateful for the fully funded tuition, stipend and health insurance. I think it is generous, all things considered. I think the part that gets challenging is the gray area around outside work. If fully funded students were more openly allowed to work outside of the TA/RA/GA position as a way to supplement the stipend, that would help. I am aware that this can be appealed, but it still seems a little uncertain as to what exactly is allowed regarding outside work. It also seems odd that it has to be approved, which adds a layer of uncertainty about what is/isn't allowed. If the stipend amount were increased, that would decrease the need to work. So, I would be good with either option, but the stipend-only criteria has created a financial hardship for my family that does cause stress and uncertainty. Otherwise, I have been very happy with my experience at a TA."

"There needs to be an increase in stipend and a 5th year. 4 years seems to be a consistently impossible target. Additionally, there should be flexibility on external employment, and more supportive options for medical circumstances and parents. Without supportive childcare options the university is limiting/deciding who gets to be an academic and who does not. Specially, this practice keeps women/mothers out of the institution. Same goes for medical issues, there needs to be more support/relief otherwise the institution is reinforcing that only healthy bodies belong."

"Everything else is fine and I like helping students to learn. An increase in stipend of 15-20% would offset the cumulative inflation we've seen since 2019. Either way I'm going to finish my PhD, but you guys either need to allow us to earn extra money by getting a 2nd job or increase the stipend to offset the cost of living increase. Thank you for listening."

"Stipend needs to be increased significantly and work hours need to be monitored. As a Teaching assistant we should have the ability to tell the supervisor that work hours exceed the required contractual time allocated for TA work as per the contract."

"Stipend needs to be increased. And supervisors need to understand that TA's have just 20 hours allotted for work and not more"

"I appreciate the stipend, fully-funded tuition and health insurance. However, the financial situation is a hardship and causes stress. If students were allowed multiple TA/RA/GA positions or allowed to more openly work outside of the program, that would help. If the stipend increases, that would be great news. I understand that outside work can be considered, but that still seems like a little bit of an uncertainty given the need for approval and the original messaging that work would not be allowed. Individual part-time work would be very easy to maintain and would help financially."

"I like gaining the experience, but not being able to have another job while TAing is not realistic. I am trying to graduate as fast as I can to get back to having a real job."

"We should be encouraged to formally track our hours. I tend to forget to do so, and know that I work more than 20 hours as per the contractual agreement."

Wellbeing:

"I have forgiven myself from going to doctors despite how sick I was due to the stipend. Please consider increasing the amount."

"I am not focused because the stipend is not enough for even the basic living "

"The stipend is low, compared to the work hours we need to put in. It is beyond what we can endure at times."

"The compensation is unlivable, and is forcing me to consider leaving the program early if there are no changes soon."

"I feel pressure from life and work, financial problems"

"It's been well documented that people with lower incomes tend to have poor health due to poor food habits and a general stress. I can attest to this from first hand experience. The prices of quality proteins and fresh produce has become unattainable with the current stipend. While this may seem innocuous now I believe it has disastrous consequences in the long term. "

"The stress of being in a bad financial situation affects my personal and academic life, I feel that every month is a struggle to get everything paid before the next month, and I am not saving money."

"The stress of my financial situation affects my personal life. I've had to go to therapy sessions to handle my depression "

"There is not much activities supporting work-life balance"

"I wish I could just feel stable for once for the amount of work I put in as a single person with no roommates trying to better myself for my future. "

"Please consider to raise our salary. Our stipend is less than enough for having a normal life which significantly affect our performance because of high financial burden. The price of everything increased and we can not afford it."

"tired, poorly paid"

"Students should be able to enjoy some life outside of school - on current stipend that isn't really possible. Increased income would make us less stressed and more consistently productive"

"we get paid just enough to not get a tax break but not really enough to live comfortably on "

"The pay you give us speaks volumes as to how you view RAs and TAs. You don't even match inflation, so even if we ever a raise it probably won't cover for the inflation from the last few years. But god forbid anyone call you out on that, and god forbid you invest more money in the happiness and well-being of your students "

"please consider the condition of couples for expenses with TA salary"

"I have had much stress about both my financial situations and mental health issues due to the highly abusive environment. RAs and TAs are generally less paid and treated without respect. I also think because of the power the faculties have without any direct oversight, this situation happens to all students without resources of help. There should be more accountability on the faculties to be better academic advisors. And I think the first thing to do is to recognize the current environment is abusive, toxic and counter-productive, and there is a lot to be changed. "

"To better help PhDs have reasonable living conditions and increase academic productivity, please increase monthly stipend for RA/TA/GA. Thanks!"

"My academics and mental wellbeing have suffered a lot in the past from having to live in really unsafe areas to afford lower rent in the past. I'm thankful to live in a safer place now, but I've had to pull out loans to afford this, and I also have to commute to school. It's even harder now with how high cost of living is in Dallas. I think it would help greatly to increase stipends enough to at least compensate for rises in rent around Dallas in the past 2 years. Thank yall for putting this survey together and showing interest in our financial wellbeing."

"Honestly, if we could have a higher stipends, life and study would be much better."

"It is hard to be creative or productive or look forward to the future when you are financially insecure. My living situation inhibits what I try to do as a researcher and TA everyday - so much so that I have to sit down and see if it is feasible to continue my PhD every semester. I feel like my career outlook would be significantly better at an institution that paid more or offered more benefits. I have tried and will try my best to deter any inquiring UTD undergraduates from graduate school at UTD for this reason. "

"Have to be a TA for 2 courses and only received 1780 after tax. Can't live at all "

"With rising costs of inflation it's been hard to survive on the stipend would kindly request an increase. Further the rent has been increased for the next academic year it would be hard to survive on the current salary."

"I love teaching, but the expectations academically and for independent research are not reflected in the stipend. Some people are REALLY struggling with mental health as a result. I do odd jobs to make more money even though it's not really allowed"

"Struggling for scraps and struggling to make my ends meet was the last thing I expected when I joined the PhD program at UTD. I knew the stipend was not great when I joined. However, I expected the stipend to increase based on the market inflation rates. Seems like at UTD, the costs do increase every year, but the stipend rarely does. In 7

years, the EE department increased the stipend once. By \$100. Even if I am grateful for that, it is nowhere close to helping the students allay their financial fears. I wonder how people with families even cope."

"an upgrade of the monthly allowance would definitely help us be more focused on our studies."

"Poor and exhausted. Have no idea when this will end. Consider quitting in every day."

"The payment is not enough for the food nowadays. It's like you are trying to push the students to not have a fun and entertain ourselves once a week but only work. Too psychological pressure and depression! Certainly depression is common to most of the UTD students I talk to. The food in the student union is expensive and unhealthy! Also, there is no European culture, activities and food in the campus!"

"I hope the working hours can be limited. Sometimes, the supervisor asks me to do more even on weekend, and calls me at night. I hope I can have some private time and less stress. "

"Based on financial constraints, I've had to make some major lifestyle changes and sacrifices, which I know will not be sustainable in the long run for both my academic excellence and life pursuits, hence I would deeply appreciate it if the stipend was increased."

"I think if the university increase the stipends about just 20%, many students can be more productive and concentrate more on their academic program"

"Please increase the stipend as i cant work to my fullest with having no savings and thinking every month how to manage finances"

"I believe that regarding the high cost of life, including rent, food, utility, etc., our stipend should increase by at least 50% to make us relieved from the financial stress. With all the financial hardship it is really hard to concentrate on the rigorous phd program. As a 1st year student, it has been really shocking to me to face this discrepancy between my wage and real costs, and I am under debt right now and I do not see any improvement in my life for the rest of this program which will be another 4-5 years . I believe that all PhD students deserve to have a peace of mind and not to worry about their basic needs. But unfortunately, we are struggling badly. I really hope that the school significantly increases our wage, otherwise this problems will force many talents to choose not to pursue PhD anymore."

"I hope the stipend increases to at least 2500 after taxes, so that students are not under financial hardships while pursuing something mentally exhausting as a Ph.D."

"I spoke in depth about this with junior faculty and she said that I should in no way be considering leaving early for financial concerns and that I should stay as long as possible to create the best resume possible and publish in order to receive an R1 job. I am not able to do that. I have taken student loans and credit card debt and must leave as soon as possible. I have already made financial accommodations including buying a cheaper car and I am moving in with roommates just to afford food without further debt. "

"A person living below minimum wage with such academic pressure cannot be productive. This pay is inhumane. We are worrying each month how to finance our studies. This a huge problem of anxiety. Stipend should be at least 2300 (post tax)."

"Please increase our stipend so that we don't have to worry about other stuffs and focus on our studies. "

"the overall costs has increased considerably in the past couple of months, owing to the inflation of the country. supporting with basic facilities itself needs planning and hold back. But for the overall productivity for any human, need support more than basic amenities such as socializing and self pamper sometimes helps. Increase in the stipend (which is quite less after tax deductions) would help us. "

"I should have put TA rather than RA at the beginning of the poll, but I could not go back. I would rather dig trenches in Ukraine than work as a TA for the disrespectful and downright spiteful teaching faculty at this school. I deeply regret my decision to join the program, I am suffering extreme stress, and the stipend increases we are promised never happened for me. This was a blatant breach of contract by the school which I have no power to address or remedy. The Ph.D. degree no longer carries the payoffs which attracted me to it in the first place. It is too much of a risk, and I am leaving for the job market prematurely just so I don't have to serve as a TA again. The requirements are insane, and you are treated like a servant rather than an employee. You receive no protection from oppressive behavior. If you speak up, you will be punished and your academic career ruined. Teaching faculty receive no repercussions, no matter the scope of their misconduct."

"An increase in stipend would alleviate the stress and anxiety"

"Salary must be increased. Living in Dallas is not easy. I am 28 and unmarried because I am afraid I might not be able to afford a wife."

"the wage is to low and cannot cover my spending every month. The wage can only cover my rent, and worried about financial situation everyday. "

"Studying phd is really hard and put a lot of pressure on you, besides that you should always calculate what should I buy, what shouldn't I buy, even for a food you should think about the cost, at least stipend should increase 20

percent because of the inflation, but this is not enough, most of Phd students are international students and cannot have another income, monthly expenditures put a lot of pressure on them. "

"I hope our stipend can be increased. It is very important for phd student to pursue their degree without needing to worry about the living, the expense. We can focus more on our study."

"An increase in stipend will surely help to lead a proper academic life."

"The amount that we get as an TA/ RA is pretty low based on the huge inflation that happened recently. Is hard to maintain everything. This situation is really affecting our performance."

"Due to inflation, the stipend of students are really unfair. The stipend received from the university can only be spent on house rent. Does the student not need money to provide food and entertainment? Doesn't a student need to buy warm clothes in the cold winter?"

"I appreciate the stipend, fully-funded tuition and health insurance. However, the financial situation is a hardship and causes stress. If students were allowed multiple TA/RA/GA positions or allowed to more openly work outside of the program, that would help. If the stipend increases, that would be great news. I understand that outside work can be considered, but that still seems like a little bit of an uncertainty given the need for approval and the original messaging that work would not be allowed. Individual part-time work would be very easy to maintain and would help financially."

"The stipend I get here is very low compared to my expenses here is Dallas, although I always eat at home and rarely hangout with friends. This makes PhD even more stressful. I wouldn't recommend anyone to pursue PhD here unless they have a another reliable source of income"

"It would really make our lives easier if the authorities can increase out monthly stipend, considering the rising prices of everything. All most all my friends do have lots of issues in managing the 1777\$ monthly income to fulfill their basic essential needs. Most of my friends in other friends have to pay only 400-600\$ for apartment fee unlike us. so they eat and live well, unlike us."

"if a PhD student has Financial concerns, instead of fully working on their thesis and research, they will work with 50% capacity as they will always have to worry and try to manage the expenses and the bills. Now consider those who are married!!! double the pressure and financial hardship. my husband has no insurance here and got injured but we couldn't take him to a doctor or MRI as we cannot afford the expenses (insurance, doctor, MRI, medicine, etc)"

"I love UTD. But the stipend amount makes it very difficult to cover normal expenses and not have financial worry a concern."

"UTD doesn't care about graduate students wellbeing. Specially financially. May not all the graduates schools. Business schools pays enough to survive."

"Based on the inflation the amount of stipend is not even cover the basic expenses nearly. It also affect the quality of food that we receiving which impacts health and also the lack of money to do fun stuff affect the mental health as well"

"Please increase the stipend. It is unbelievably hard to make end meets with the current stipend. We haven't even discussed emergency incidental expenses (emergency, life, conferences). \$1,900 after taxes IS NOT ENOUGH to cover anything in this inflation."

"We are too poor and financially stressed "

" While I appreciate UT Dallas' concern for the stipend and financial well-being of Ph.D. students, I am seriously concerned about my financial security. The biggest concern I have is about the time when I might get sick or an unfortunate accident might happen to one of us. How will we take care of these costs in such a case? UT Dallas is one of the best R1 universities in the US, so I think it would be great if the university raised its Ph.D. students' stipend so that we could save a certain percentage of our stipend and be more productive. I appreciate you taking the time to conduct this survey and considering our opinions. "

"department is helpful and also the supervisor. Some days I worry if I'll have enough money to finish the PhD. Many weekends I don't go out just because of the cost would be too high to uber back and forth + the expenses of the outing itself. Easily surpasses 100 dollar a night."

"My quality of life improved after having access to my spouse's income. Without that additional income, I would struggle to afford transportation, healthcare, and food."

Other:

"We may need guideline about whether phd can be extended to the six year, so students and advisors will not be afraid that there will be no stipen for extended years."

"The president isn't doing as well as other university presidents I've had"

"Need more RA positions for PhD students."

"the number of TA is too small"

*"*I made a mistake earlier in the survey and couldn't go back, I was confused by the question about hours spent 'studying' since I don't take classes anymore. But I'd say I work for 30-40 hours per week on research and another 20 hours as a TA "*

"There should be annual stipend increases that match inflation. The university should extend some kind of housing benefits for TA/RA/GA's. Benefits to acquire/maintain work laptops would be very helpful."

"The summer semester must be covered for TA and RA always, since all the apartments, electricity and internet companies have annual contracts and if the RA or TA doesn't have find then he has to pay a lot of money without have any income "

"I have had much stress about both my financial situations and mental health issues due to the highly abusive environment. RAs and TAs are generally less paid and treated without respect. I also think because of the power the faculties have without any direct oversight, this situations happens to all students without resources of help. There should be more accountability on the faculties to be better academic advisors. And i think the first thing to do is to recognize the current environment is abusive, toxic and counter-productive, and there is a lot to be changed. "

"It is incredibly frustrating to be assigned as TA for professors who are incompetent, both generally and in their supposed specializations. Worse, there is a Nazi sympathizer among the professorial ranks here."

"Hope the increasing cost of living is taken into account for stipend revisions. If TA/RA assignments are made earlier, then it would reduce the stress about time without income."

"I think i said enough. UTD needs to stop behaving like a community college if they want to attract the right people "

"There needs to be an increase in stipend and a 5th year. 4 years seems to be a consistently impossible target. Additionally, there should be flexibility on external employment, and more supportive options for medical circumstances and parents. Without supportive childcare options the university is limiting/deciding who gets to be an academic and who does not. Specially, this practice keeps women/mothers out of the institution. Same goes for medical issues, there needs to be more support/relief otherwise the institution is reinforcing that only healthy bodies belong. "

"I am passionate about teaching. So I would like to spend more time with students teaching. I wish there was an option to choose the hours I can teach"

"Exam days concurrent with grading is a hassle."

"Please increase the TA/RA/GA monthly stipend in order to have a better life. Moreover, please consider equal pay for TAs and RAs. Because all of them are supposed to work the same hours (20 hours per week). As a result, justice will be established between all students."

"Sports resource is limited. For example, the badminton courts are limited and is hard to book."

"Currently, I need to save money for 1.5 years to buy a used car without any travel expenses."

"I wish there was more input into which TA assignment I am given. I have been a TA for a lab classes for 3 years now, I would like to become a lecture TA. I believe my seniority as a TA should allow me to have some say into my TA assignment. TA should also be able to earn bonuses for proctoring and grading exams outside their assigned course. For example, I have been a TA for organic chemistry lab since I started at UTD, but have had to proctor and grade organic chemistry lecture exams every single semester. This is unfair. I do more work with no compensation. "

"The payment is not enough for the food nowadays. It's like you are trying to push the students to not have a fun and entertain ourselves once a week but only work. Too psychological pressure and depression! Certainly depression is common to most of the UTD students I talk to. The food in the student union is expensive and unhealthy! Also, there is no European culture, activities and food in the campus!"

"All PhD students should be paid a stipend irrespective of their employment. "

"Please help us to plan for our future as we are in our early careers "

"free parking"

"We need more TAs"

"Have more RA/TA options for students to choose from. The options seem very limited. It should be based on students interest and academic growth. "

"Improve the system."

"Too much work, too fewer TA"

"I do think we need some support about housing, parking, and other financial support. "

"Parking should be free/affordable for PhD students, and there should be more capacity in UV housing"

"The university system is really good but stipends need to be increased. Moreover, came to know that new comer are getting more money than us who joined 2019, same steams subject, same department. On my opinion salary should be fair based on our experience or be equal."

"married should be considered to receive financial support for dependents"

"Stipends should rise with inflation. Internships should be encouraged."

"I hope stipend can increase by some suitable amount, I hope also if possible that medical insurance can include the student's spouse ."

"The bursar payment plan for my housing is very bad. Last semester I paid all of my rent just by two payments and 2500\$ for each month. I ask them several times to reschedule my payment but they never respond me and I am also worry about my payments for next semester. It was my worst experience and I had a lot of stress for my 2500\$ monthly payments"

"Well, its the inflation that is the problem."

"The only problem is in Dallas, 2000 per month (before tax) is too low to have a good living situation. I hope school could offer cheaper housing options for TA/RA. One more thing, I hope TA also could access the department copy room because sometimes we need help Professor print exams sheets or homework."

"When errors are made (such as incorrect/lower monthly stipend payments), we should NOT have to wait until the 1st of the next month to get the corrected payment. Also, how is it that these errors are even made?? From what I hear, these errors are made frequently. Myself and other classmates have experienced this issue. Why is it so difficult for the person whose job it is in payroll to enter in the correct amount. The amounts are specified in our contracts so there is no reason why the monthly stipend should ever be wrong. It is annoying to have to wait until the first of the next month to get reimbursed. Secondly, I purposely moved from Northside apartments to the University Village. I like working as a TA/RA/GA and have many great experiences in my duties. I do find it a little unfair that TA's in my school work more hours and get paid less than TA's in other schools at UTD. Seems unfair. "

"The TA assignment process needs transparency and match"

"Overworked, underpaid, professors don't actually help with anything."

"The question about how much we are able to save from our stipend each month didn't provide 0% as an option, that seems out of touch. I cannot imagine how people are able to save giving the TA amount"

"If conferences and other academic experiences are highly recommended for funded students, then full reimbursement needs to be provided. There is not enough money being provided for all the conferences that are highly encouraged "

"TA graduate instructors work full time hours with the same pay as non-instructor TA students who work half those hours. This is unfair. Graduate students who are instructors should be compesa."

"While I spend roughly 20 hrs a week cumulatively for TA work and studying, I spend the majority of my time (40-50 hrs per week) on research in lab and at home."

"I am over 65 and have medicare. The recent insurance for TAs did not affect me and I feel I should receive this credit, in part or in full, as part of my stipend. Further, I receive six hours tuition-free due to my age. I am happy I am able to make academic and educational contributions at my age. I do not want to lose my position! However, If there was possibility to apply more individuated plans for nontraditional student/TAs, that would be great. Also, I am not the only nontraditionally aged student/TA--so I hope I'm speaking on behalf of more than myself. "

"UTD needs a lot more EV charging stations."

"I am a new student and all of my answers are an estimate about my life"

"professors' power on administration need to be checked and balanced by PhD students community"

"Lack if funding and support in labs is also a major issue"

"Having flexible working hours"

"I worked as both TA and RA amd sometimes both in a semester."