



ADVOCACY REPORT SUMMER 2025

University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Graduate Student Organization (GSO)



UNIVERSITY of
LOUISIANA
L A F A Y E T T E

**Graduate Student
Organization**

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PREFACE

The following report identifies areas that the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) in partnership with others at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (faculty, staff, student organizations, and campus offices) can continue to develop to sustain our graduate students.

Our goal is to **raise awareness** of the role of GSO in advocating, funding, and communicating with and for graduate students to address the issues that they face throughout their graduate education.

Thus, this report will add value to the ongoing University-wide discussion on how to **better support graduate students** to develop professionally.

Using real student responses, this report also strives to **provide a platform for unheard graduate student voices**, candidly sharing ideas and sentiments that may otherwise never find an audience.

Lastly, the Organization has needed to adapt from 2020-2021, and our Department Representatives and Executive Board have put in more work than ever before to increase the Organization's profile and grow operations.

ORGANIZATION INTRODUCTION

All graduate students at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette are automatically members of the Graduate Student Organization (GSO).

We are here to advocate for you! The GSO supports graduate students in several ways:

Advocacy

One of the most important things we do is to represent the needs and concerns of our members to the university administration. The GSO president serves on the University Graduate Council, the Graduate Appeals Committee, as well as other administrative committees the Dean of Graduate School deems appropriate. Student representatives from graduate departments meet each semester to discuss issues that are important to graduate students.

Funding

Graduate students know that conducting research and presenting at conferences puts a strain on our limited budgets. The GSO uses student-assessed fees to help offset the cost of research and travel-related expenses! We also provide one-time grants for purchasing thesis, dissertation, or project supplies.

Communication

The GSO is one of many important relays to get vital information to graduate students. Check out Facebook and this website often for the latest GSO information. Your representative is also a reliable source of information. Find your representative [here](#)!

If there is an issue that you would like to see the GSO address, or if you are interested in helping, please do not hesitate to contact us at gso@louisiana.edu.

Like us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

SUMMER 2025 REFLECTIONS

GSO General Council Participation

- Maintained 100% occupancy on the Executive Board since Fall 2022:
 - Clement Tochukwu Okolo – President (August 2022)
 - Farooq Azam Khanzada – Vice President (Summer 2025)
 - Elizabeth Boyd – Treasurer (Summer 2025)
 - Tessa Rock – PR Coordinator (November 2023)
 - Traelyn Brassaeux – Secretary (August 2024)

Summer 2025 Department Representatives Table

Department	Representative
Accounting (ACCN)	Vacant
Architecture (ARCH)	Vacant
Biology (BIOL)	Kevin Torgersen
Business Administration (MBA)	Terri Richard
Chemical Engineering (CHEE)	Elizabeth Boyd
Chemistry (CHEM)	Vacant
Civil Engineering (CIVE)	Farooq Azam Khanzada
Communications (COMM)	Nuzhat Tabassum
Communicative Disorders (CODI)	Mary McMahon
Computing and Informatics (CMIX)	Traelyn Brasseaux
Counselor Education (CNED)	Reem Ahmed
Criminal Justice (CJUS)	Vacant
Educational Curriculum & Instruction (EDCI)	Vacant
Educational Foundations & Leadership (EDFL)	Brianna Doucet
Electrical Engineering (EECE)	Mohamed Ghoneim
English (ENGL)	Yazdan Mahmoudi
Geosciences (GEOS)	Precious Batubo
History (HIST)	Taylor Townsend
Industrial Technology (ITEC)	Vacant
Kinesiology (KINE)	Vacant
Mathematics (MATH)	Vacant
Mechanical Engineering (MECH)	Vacant

Modern Languages (MODL)	Vacant
Music (MUSC)	Vacant
Nursing (NURS)	Vacant
Petroleum Engineering (PETE)	Silver Damigoru
Physics (PHYS)	John Miller
Psychology (PSYC)	Taylor Roussel

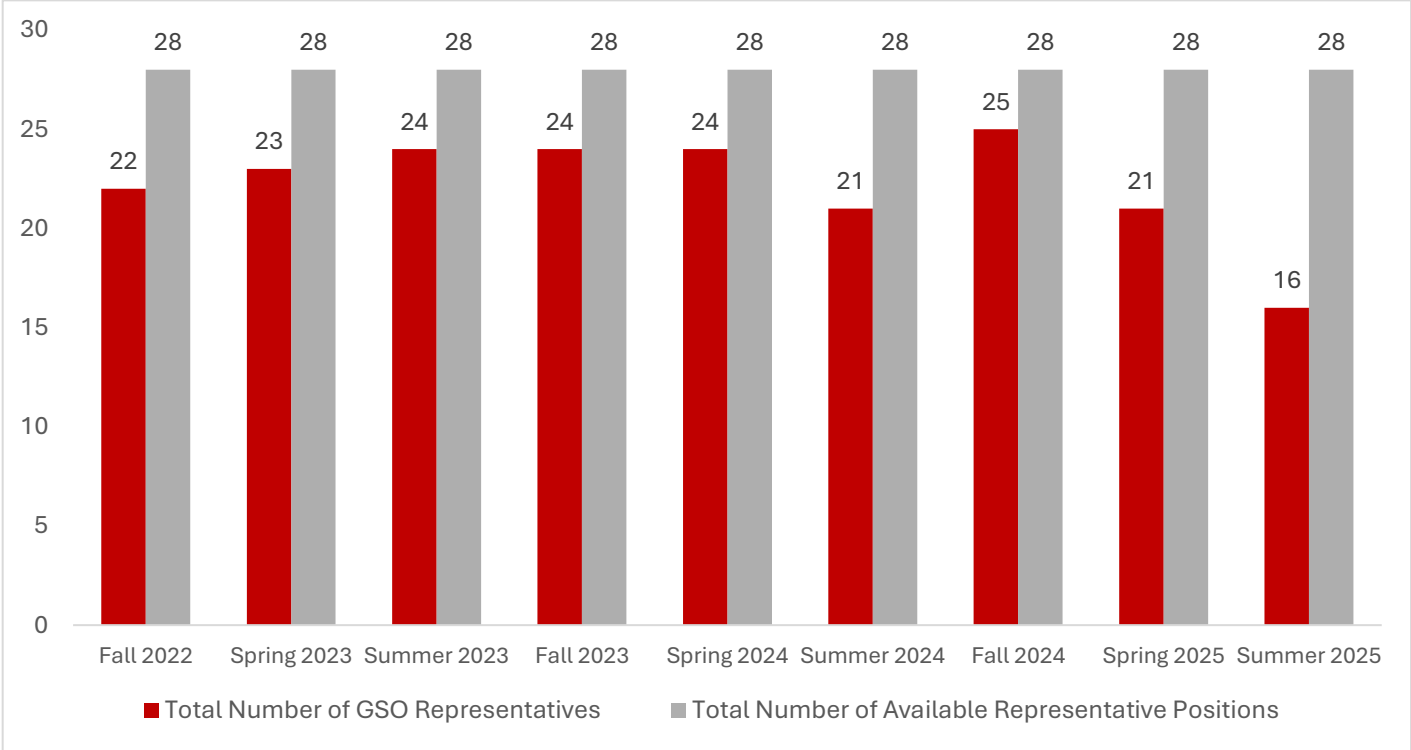
Key:

Vacant
Departments

Departments which
received funding

Note: Departments without a representative are not eligible for funding. The following departments requested funding but were ineligible due to a vacant representative position: MODL, CHEM, and MATH.

GSO Representative Count



Vacancy

- The Departments of Accounting (ACCN) and Educational Curriculum & Instruction (EDCL) have been unrepresented for over a year.
- The Department of Nursing (NURS) has been unrepresented since Spring 2023.
- The Department of Architecture (ARCH) has been vacant due to failure to replace graduating representatives since Fall 2024.
- Chemistry (CHEM), Industrial Technology (ITEC), Mathematics (MATH), Mechanical Engineering (MECH), Music (MUSC), Criminal Justice (CJUS), and Modern Languages (MODL) were unrepresented since Summer 2025.
- Addressing this lack of representation is crucial for our collective advocacy efforts.

GSO Graduates

- John Miller (PHYS)
- Abdelrahman Garbie (MECH)
- Tessa Rock (BIOL)
- Taylor Russel (PSYC)

Advocacy

- Addressing Student Concerns
 - Recognizing the importance of addressing a wider range of concerns, GSO maintained and will continue to maintain open channels for graduate students to share their feedback about university departments and their related services.
 - GSO actively solicited and gathered specific feedback from students related to their interactions with various university departments. The objective is to identify areas of concern and potential barriers that students may face.
 - The feedback collected is analyzed in order to determine effective advocacy strategies to address student issues.

Funding

- Doctoral Research and Travel Grant Program
 - The Doctoral Research and Travel Grant Program is currently on hold due to temporary issues with the funding source. We anticipate that the program will resume soon. Updates will be shared as soon as more information becomes available.
- Application Trends for the GSO Applications in Recent Semesters:
 - 2020-2021 – **86** Applications
 - Summer 2023 – **13** applications
 - Fall 2023 – **74** applications
 - Spring 2024 – **64** applications
 - Summer 2024 – **16** applications
 - Fall 2024 – **83** applications
 - Spring 2025 – **95** applications
 - Summer 2025 – **17** applications
- In **Summer 2025**, the number of applications (17) exceeded the totals from the previous two summers. However, despite this increase, both the **total amount requested**, and the **total amount funded** were lower compared to the summers of 2024 and 2023.
- In the Summer 2025 semester, our initial budget was \$5,000 curated with student fees, which was used to fund 9 applications. We did not fund 8 applications, 4 of which were incomplete applications, 2 applicants already received the maximum funds (\$400) for the semester, and 1 travel application was for a conference in November rendering ineligible for Summer 2025. Surplus funds of \$1,000 were left in the research funds category, \$138.00 in the professional development category, \$100.00 in the programming category, and totaling \$1,238 in unused funds, which will go back into the GSO bank account.
 - The following departments received GSO financial support:
 - Chemical Engineering (CHEE)
 - Chemistry (CHEM)
 - Communicative Disorders (CODI)
 - Educational Foundations & Leadership (EDFL)
 - Modern Languages (MODL)

GSO Summer 2025 Funding Table

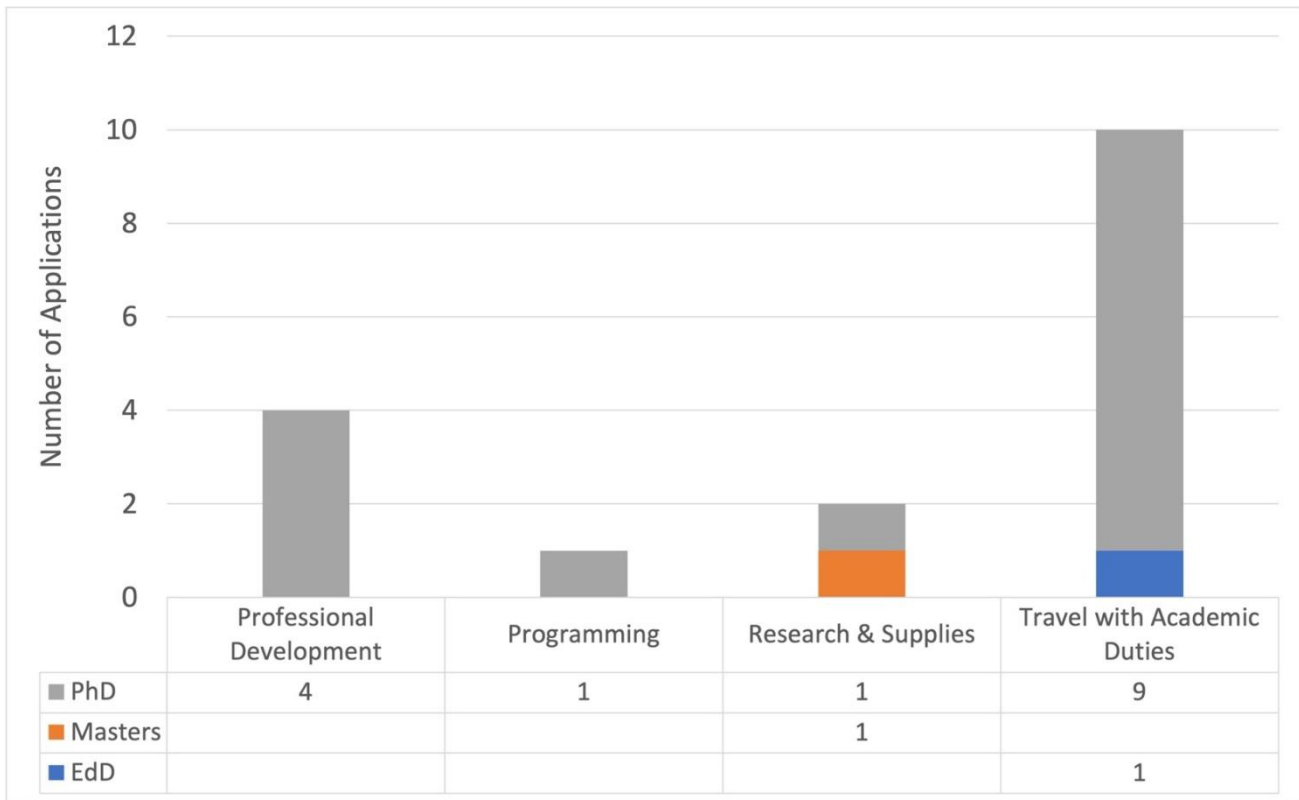
DEPTS	TRAVEL		RESEARCH		PROF. DEV.		P R O G	TOTAL FUNDED		TOTAL REQ.	
	W/ Duties	W/O Duties	Supplies	Printing	Fees	Exams		(#)	(\$)	(#)	(\$)
ACCN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BIOL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MBA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CHEE	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	73	1	73
CHEM	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	160
CIVE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
COMM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CODI	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	3500	7	3500
CMIX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CNED	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CJUS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EDCI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EDFL	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	89	3	1089
EECE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENGL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GEOS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HIST	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ITEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KINE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MATH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MODL	2	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	5	520
MUSC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NURS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PETE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PHYS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PSYC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	10	0	0	2	4	0	1	9	3662	17	5342

Total apps: **17**

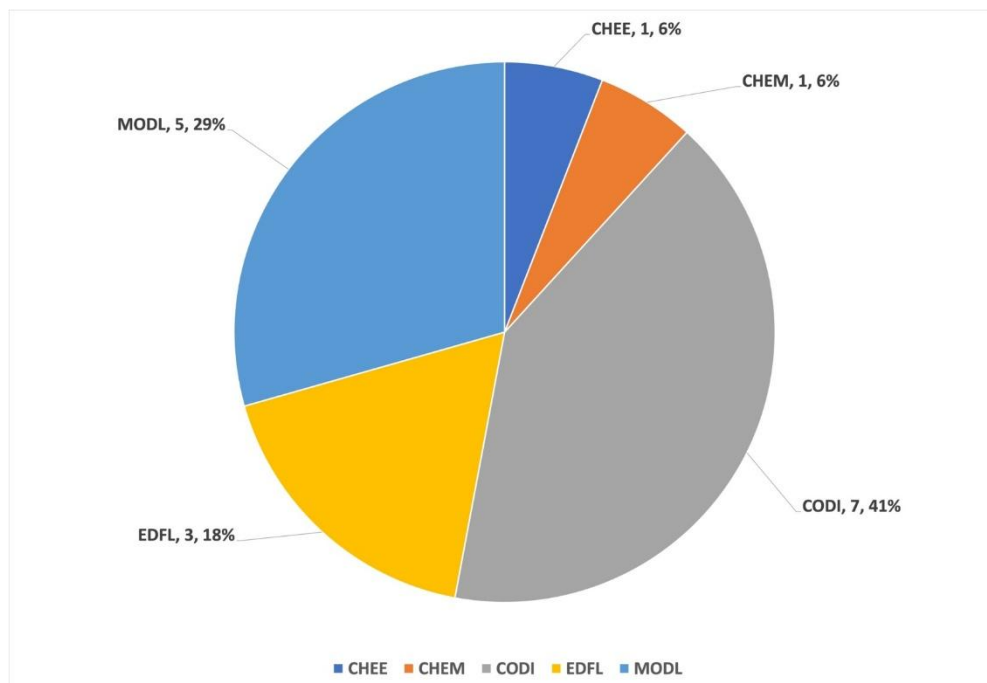
Total requested funds: **\$5,342**

Total eligible requested funds: **\$3,662**

Composition of Summer 2025 Applications



Composition of Summer 2025 Application by Department



Total Funding Requests Across the Past Years

