

## Graduate program requirements

Graduate programs frequently demand an increased level of course reading, more so than undergraduate programs. The GPA, as a social science based program, is absolutely no exception. While increasingly many of our course materials are provided in electronic format, we have yet to embrace a paperless workload (if ever). Frequently, we are expected to read 50 double-sided pages per week per class. For a full-time student this amounts to 2250 double-sided pages per semester, three times our printing allowance. Most of our courses are structured in a similar way: with a shorter mid-term and a longer term paper. Oftentimes term papers require students to conduct a mini-research project, which will often involve retrieving materials from online databases. These materials are over and above the standard course readings.

Although it is very equitable to give everyone in the university the same allowance it is also misguided and contrary to many other universities' policies. NYU, for example, has different printing policies in different schools, as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

As you can see from the attached petition, many students are reading online and are forgoing other readings due to the unfair printing policy. Digital reading is much more inconvenient and does not typically fit into the lifestyles of most students in the program (try reading Michel Foucault on your laptop on the 4 train, for example). Most GPA students have day jobs while maintaining full-time, evening course-loads and frequently have to fit reading/studying around work breaks or train journeys. Studies show that students find material harder to absorb on a computer screen compared to paper. Furthermore, note taking is much more difficult.

## Comparison to other New York City schools

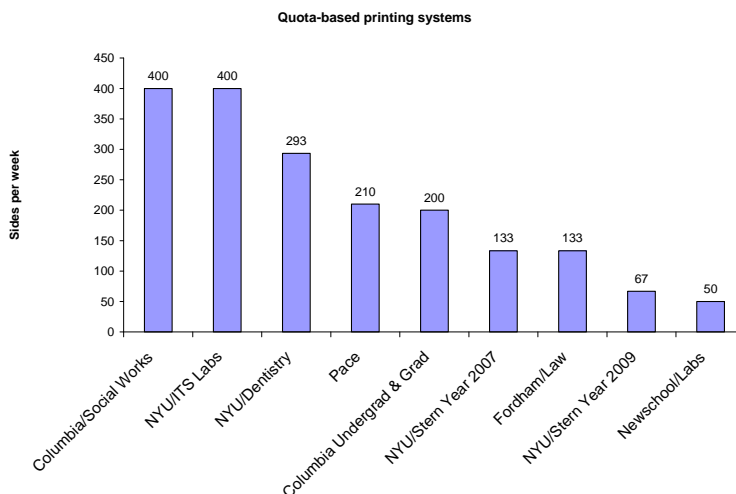


Figure 1 - Printing comparison with other NYC schools<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 1** provides an indication of how far away from the norm the New School printing policy is. New School provides the **lowest** printing allowance compared to Pace, Columbia, Fordham Law and NYU. NYU Stern is phasing their paper reduction program in over three years (first and last year are presented in the

<sup>1</sup> All data was retrieved from the universities' websites. Some conversions were needed to calculate a per week allowance, as many schemes operate across the whole semester or the whole year. Where necessary

chart).

### **Implementation concerns**

We feel that the policy was implemented without taking into consideration the problems GPIA and other graduate students face. Frankly speaking, we feel this policy was misguided and ill-thought through. We are, of course, reticent to make such bold claims given that we were not part of the decision making process, however the following evidence has led up to conclude this.

- Different students within the university have markedly different printing requirements. No metrics could have been taken on this as last year no students were required to login before they printed material. Many universities that offer free printing, demand students input their username and password before the job is sent to the printer. Had this been done the university would have had adequate information to calculate the mean and standard deviation of printing requirements per program. This would have allowed a more realistic printing policy to be implemented. **Note:** *it is now impossible to measure printing usages as some people with alternative printing options, such as a work printer and an understanding or unaware boss, have started printing elsewhere.*
- NYU Stern business school has recognized that reducing paper is important, as we all acknowledge, but is phasing in their printing reduction over a three year period. This will give them plenty of opportunities to consider whether the limits set are appropriate and realistic. We feel the allowance at the New School is neither appropriate nor realistic.
- The printers in the labs are still not set to print on duplex by default. This seems like an obvious change that could have been made last year (as at least one of the GPIA student government representatives requested) in an effort to reduce waste.
- This policy is causing genuine hardship across the university. We do not know where the GPIA stands in terms of being most impacted, but we do know that practically every student in our program rushed to sign the petition to show their support. Many have stressed that they are already adding more credit to their account, and we are not even halfway through the semester!
- There are students in our program with learning disabilities which mean they find it much harder to read on a computer screen. They have been given no special dispensation for their disability.
- The Cashier's office is not designed to support student lifestyles. We understand that an online recharge system is on the way, this reinforces our claim that the policy has been poorly implemented.

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We assumed a 15 week semester and two semesters per year. The following URLs were used to retrieve this information. We have attempted to be as fair as possible in interpreting the figures.

<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/faq/131.html>.

<http://www.nyu.edu/cgi-bin/its/askits/kbasedetail.pl?doc=SVC0420>

[http://appserv.pace.edu/execute/page.cfm?doc\\_id=27509](http://appserv.pace.edu/execute/page.cfm?doc_id=27509)

<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/faq/131.html>.

<http://www.stern.nyu.edu/it/connect/print.html>

[http://law.fordham.edu/ihtml/tech-2students\\_pharosp.ihtml?id=199](http://law.fordham.edu/ihtml/tech-2students_pharosp.ihtml?id=199)

## **What we would like to see happen**

- Some students have already exhausted their quota. We request that you immediately increase the allocation to every GPIA student to allow them to comfortably get through this semester. This will allow us all to tackle this issue without undue pressure.
  - We would like to see a phased policy introduced similar to that at Stern Business School. This will allow the institution to capture meaningful statistics on a per student basis that can be aggregated at the program level. To achieve this, the printing allowance on the first year (or first semester) should be well above the current level. Figure 1 provides some reasonable indications of where you might want to consider setting the quota levels.
  - Ensure duplex is the default and institute a trial econ-mode printing (to reduce ink usage) for most stations in the main computer lab. If the faculty is willing to accept students handing assignments in econ-mode then consider making this the default campus-wide.
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## **Response to Lillian's email**

- *As you may know during the last few years wasteful black and white printing has been on the rise.*
  - Why? What is causing people to be more wasteful in recent years? Surely, an awareness of the environmental impact of resources should reduce the wastefulness of people.
- *We've tried taking steps to manage this before considering this level of print control. Steps taken in the computing labs include providing duplex printing, assigning one printer at the University Computing Center to print on printed paper - minimizing waste, requiring users to release print jobs at the printer - reducing unnecessary printing, enforcing limits on copies made as well as educating users of associated environmental issues.*
  - Duplex printing is still not the default in the computer lab. Surely, this is the logical first step in reducing paper. I do not understand "assigning one printer ... to print on printed paper".
  - The "release jobs" function is great. If people had to login to print you may be able to track people who release 100 page jobs and leave them in the lab.
- *Nonetheless wasteful printing continued. There were many cases in which users did not retrieve 100 plus page documents, would use the printers as copiers to print many copies of their papers, printed articles of interest but failed to reclaim them from the printer and modified/printed document hastily only to have to repeat the process several times over. Given the increase in printing waste, even with the efforts made to control it, additional print controls were needed.*

*The New School Printing Policy and its effects on the GPIA student body*

- We would argue that Academic Technology have done very little to meaningfully reduce waste. First, how do they know that people were printing so many pages of the same document? If they claimed the material it would seem to be a very difficult thing to track. Sometimes we are expected to supply handouts to the class and we need to print 20 single-sided copies.
- *There are no formal documents that I can offer you, but I can tell you that before coming up with the number of free black/white pages the committee looked at black/white print usage and practices in academic facilities, considered research on how other school's managed this issue and considered the degree population as one group regardless of association or classification.*
  - Without minutes from the meetings they had it is very difficult to understand the thought process they went through. This implies 'rush job' to us.
  - What academic facilities did they look into? We have checked with NYU, Columbia, Fordham and Pace and our policy is the most restrictive. Details are available in separate document.
- *All university computing labs, Libraries and interested departments have this print policy in place.*
  - A policy that is implemented across the board like this fails to recognize that different programs have different printing requirements. The fact that Parsons has a color printing allowance already recognizes there are differences, but for some reason the school does not think these differences are applicable to black and white copies.
- *We understand that GPIA graduate students feel that graduate students need a greater allocation of pages. We welcome you to research how other schools are providing printing to their graduate students and present a case for increasing the number pages for graduate students as a whole.*
  - GPIA reading loads vary class-by-class. Some professors construct readers, but these are now the exception rather than the rule. Some professors suggest a couple of books to read, but most professors provide materials in electronic format. An estimate is 100 pages per week per class. This equates to 50 double-sided sheets of paper per week per class. The semester is 15 week long so this is 750 sheets per class. This means *one* GPIA class would account for a typical students printing quota for a semester. Full-time students take three classes per semester. Therefore, students would be expected to print out only one article in three to read. This is excluding materials for class presentations and assignments.

As mentioned earlier, we have conducted research on how other schools handled this issue. Those schools were Colombia, Fordham, NYU, NYU Stern, and Pace University. Usually, there printing policies vary amongst schools. However, all schools surveyed had far better and less restrictive printing policies than the New School.

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Some other arguments

- 1) When I got to the writing center or to see the reference librarian should I pay for it? Why should the people who never use those things pay for my usage? Likewise, why should we pay a guest speaker a few hundred dollars to come and talk to us, when not everyone participates? Why don't we charge people to come to all the talks at TNS?
- 2) Should we tackle the faculty on this?