The School of Graduate studies continued to grow during the academic year 2007-2008. Graduate enrollment increased from 2266 in the Fall of 2007 to 3020 in the Fall of 2008, a 33% increase. This increase was due to the increased enrollment in the online graduate program, and this increase is projected to continue. Staff workload problems were encountered due to the increase in enrollment during the year. Currently, the secretary is handling all of the duties listed under the Dean’s Secretary and serving as an Admissions Coordinator. The problem we have now is that she is trying to answer the phone, be a receptionist, and carry out all of the other secretarial duties while preparing all of the admission files and letters. With the anticipated increase in applications (new Ed.S. program and growth the other graduate programs) there needs to be additional clerical help in the graduate office ($30,000).

Even though the on-campus graduate enrollment has remained fairly constant at about 400+ students per semester, students in the remote areas of UWA’s service area continue to opt to take courses online rather than drive to the main campus. Graduate extension efforts are limited to Demopolis and Thomasville. Enrollment in the Demopolis center has been very good. However, probably due to the growth of the online program and the success of the Demopolis center, the enrollment in Thomasville has continued to decline. Three new Ed.S. programs in Elementary Education, School Counseling, and Library Media have been developed and will be added Fall 2009. Additionally, the graduated program in Instructional Leadership has been redesigned and approved by the Alabama Department of Education.

The Graduate Assistant stipend was increased $700 to $7000 per nine months. Graduate students must pay their tuition and books from this stipend and this greatly reduces the actual amount of the stipend. The Graduate Council continues to feel that this amount must be increased in the future for the university to attract qualified Graduate Students into the Graduate Assistantship Program. To this end, the Graduate Council again voted unanimously to seek funds to pay tuition for up to two courses per semester for each Graduate Assistant. Based on current Graduate tuition, this would require $52,272 in new monies for the Fall and Spring semesters (22 positions at $2376.00 each.)

For the academic year 2008-2009, the School of Graduate Studies is also requesting that a new Graduate Assistant position be assigned to the International Student Committee to help with our continued efforts to recruit International Students ($8676.00).

Total new monies requested for 2009-2010:
$30,000 for additional position in the Graduate Office
$52,272 for Graduate Assistant Tuition
$ 8,676 for Graduate Assistant International Student Committee