Purpose of the GSAS Financial Aid Summary

The purpose of this document is to outline the merit-based financial aid policies of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Department chairs, program directors, administrators and all other university staff who work with the Graduate School and/or graduate student population must be aware of these policies and procedures. Please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate School should you have any questions about merit-based aid funding for graduate students.

Overview of Merit-Based Financial Aid

The Graduate School offers merit-based financial aid in the form of scholarships and stipends to graduate students on the recommendation of the academic programs. Merit-based aid is awarded without regard for need. The awards are intended to support meritorious students in the pursuit of their academic careers and timely completion of their Graduate School degree.

Student eligibility for merit-based funding is determined by a number of factors including enrollment status, academic progress and performance. It also follows the same timeline as time to degree. The Graduate School’s policy on the time permitted to complete the requirements of a Ph.D. is defined in the Bulletin as “no more than five years from achievement of candidacy to award of the Ph.D., and no more than seven years overall from matriculation to award of the Ph.D.” Therefore, Ph.D. students are eligible to receive merit-based funding during the first 5 years of their study. Similarly, master’s students are eligible to receive merit-based funding for the first 3 years of their study. Students matriculating into Master’s / Ph.D. dual degree programs are allotted one additional year from matriculation to complete both degrees. Such students are eligible for 5 years of full support any time within the first six years of study. Students pursuing Ph.D. and J.D. degrees concurrently are permitted two additional years from matriculation to complete both degrees. Such students are eligible for 5 years of full support any time within the first seven years of study.
**Terminology and Definitions**

The Graduate School employs specific terminology to define the types of merit-based aid available to graduate students and to manage awards appropriately. It is important to be mindful of the terminology in all correspondence, as it affects how awards are processed and reported by the university.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship</td>
<td>Partial or full award to cover coursework required for the student’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D. Assistantship</td>
<td>Stipend awarded for service performed by Ph.D. students (Student works for the money. Stipend award is equivalent to wages earned.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipend</td>
<td>The service primarily benefits others. Although the service may be related to the student’s own academic endeavors, the service supports projects driven by others. If one particular student were not here, the project would most likely continue with the service of another student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship</td>
<td>Stipend awarded with no service obligation (Student does not work for the money.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The student focuses on her/his own academic goals for the completion of their degree. The funds are utilized primarily for the student’s own individual research endeavors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Funding / Full Support</td>
<td>This term is used for awards to Ph.D. students to indicate an offer of full tuition scholarship and stipend. Such awards are available for Ph.D. students during fall and/or spring semesters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> The Graduate School does not provide funding in the summer. However, individual programs may offer summer funding independently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Year Funding</td>
<td>1. The opportunity to fund eligible Ph.D. students who are in the first 5 years of their study in the Ph.D. program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. For students matriculating with scholarship and stipend support, the commitment to fully fund them continuously for the first 5 years of their study in the Ph.D. program, as long as they remain eligible and make satisfactory progress towards their degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship Allocation</td>
<td>The GMS cost center (and relevant corresponding GMS work-tags) allotted to a program containing money for scholarship awards. This cost center may only be used for scholarship awards to students enrolled in the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipend Allocation</td>
<td>The GMS cost center (and relevant corresponding GMS work-tags) allotted to a Ph.D. program containing money for stipend awards. This cost center may only be used for stipend awards to students enrolled in the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Budget</td>
<td>An Excel spreadsheet the program is required to use to communicate all merit awards (ALL scholarships, ALL Ph.D. assistantships, ALL fellowships)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Financial Aid Budget

The financial aid budget is a spreadsheet academic programs use to communicate all award information for all graduate students. This spreadsheet also indicates that the program grants the Graduate School permission to act on its behalf by posting merit awards in Banner and processing stipend award requests in GMS, charging the cost centers listed in the spreadsheet.

Programs are required to use the spreadsheet for any and all awards to graduate students. This includes scholarship-only awards, stipend-only awards, combination scholarship + stipend awards, award updates, and awards to non-traditional students participating in the program (e.g. exchange students). The financial aid budget is the official record of all requests from the program to the Graduate School and it utilized for audit purposes.

The financial aid budget collects the following information:

- Award recipients’ name
- Award recipients’ GU ID
- Specific semester(s) of award(s) (fall, spring, summer)
- Types of awards (scholarship, Ph.D. assistantship, fellowship)
- Amount of each award
- Student's overall level of enrollment (12 credits, 13.5 credits, thesis research)
- Source of award (cost center)
- Additional notes the program may include explaining certain awards (e.g. “FLAS covers all student fees,” “We cover Yates and lab fees,” etc.)

All of this specific information enables the Graduate School to accurately process awards in a timely fashion, as well as communicate with other offices on campus (and in some cases, external to Georgetown University) regarding the status of graduate students. The information is required by the university’s many systems, which also fulfills a number of legal obligations; awards literally cannot be processed if the Graduate School does not have all of this information.

The Graduate School uses all of the information in the budgets to post scholarship awards in Banner, prepare award letters, process stipend award transactions, create reports, and communicate with many other offices on campus that are involved in the process of supporting graduate students (e.g. Student Financial Services, Office of Billing and Payment Services, Office of Global Services, Accounts Payable, Student Employment, Payroll, Tax Department, Registrar’s Office, Provost Office, etc.). Any time these offices have questions about graduate students (which happens very frequently) we reference the program’s financial aid budget. The budgets are referenced on a daily basis to process awards, communicate information, respond to inquiries from offices of all levels of authority all over campus, make corrections, or create reports.

Scholarship Funding

Graduate School Scholarships are partial or full awards that cover coursework required for the student’s degree.

Graduate School Scholarships do not cover:

- Courses retaken (e.g. after having failed the course previously)
- Courses from which a student withdraws
- Courses not required for the student’s degree
- Mandatory student fees
- Non-mandatory student fees
Summer courses

*Students are held responsible for these items. If the program desires, it may offer to use its own financial resources to cover these items for the student. However, the program is not required or expected to do so. Graduate School funds may not be used.*

**Requirements**
- Ph.D. students must be enrolled full-time for the duration of their award.
- Ph.D. students receiving full Graduate School stipend must be provided a full scholarship for the duration of their stipend award.
- Master’s students must be enrolled at the level specified by their program.
- Scholarship awards must be communicated to the Graduate School Office via the financial aid budget.

**Restrictions**
- **Students may not take a refund on scholarship.** Excess scholarship funds will be credited to the cost center.
- Scholarships may not be awarded in exchange for service; payment for service must be setup either as 1) Ph.D. assistantship through the Graduate School or hourly graduate TA or RA appointment for Master’s students, or 2) as an hourly appointment through the Office of Student Employment for all other hourly administrative student positions.
- Programs may only offer awards one academic year at a time (whether it is a fall and / or spring award). Awards may not be promised or committed for future years.
- The Graduate School does not provide funding in the summer. Individual programs may offer funding independently, but Graduate School funds may not be used.
- Graduate School scholarship funds may only be used for merit-based tuition scholarship to students enrolled in the program. Scholarship funds may not be used for any other activity, including stipend support or to reconcile other accounts.

**Procedural Notes**
- Scholarship payments are distributed directly to the Office of Billing and Payment Services.
- Students may check their scholarships by viewing their student accounts on MyAccess.
- Programs are responsible for reviewing students’ registration, adjusting awards as needed, and communicating the adjustments to the Graduate School Office via the financial aid budget.
- Programs may review scholarship payments by checking the Non-Payroll Journal Transactions report in GSM for the cost center.
- Programs should ensure their administrators have access to view activity on the scholarship allocation cost center.
Stipend Funding

Ph.D. Assistantship (Service)

Graduate School Ph.D. Assistantships are awards provided to Ph.D. students in exchange for service. These assistantships are professional appointments that allow students to develop the skills and experience required to assume leadership roles in academia and the professions as well as fulfill a necessary requirement for completion of the degree.

At times, the distinction between assistantship (service) and fellowship (non-service) may be difficult to discern, depending on the opportunity offered. For assistantships, the service provided by the student primarily benefits others (faculty, other students, etc.). Although the service may be related to the student’s own academic endeavors, the service supports projects driven by others. If one particular student were not available to provide the service, the project would most likely continue with or without the service of another student. For fellowship stipends, the student’s efforts are focused on their own academic pursuits towards the completion of their degree. If one particular student were not here, the program might distribute the fellowship stipend to a different student, whose research and project might be completely different.

Most importantly, programs must ensure consistency. In cases where the distinction between service/non-service is unclear for a particular opportunity, it is essential that the program (with the guidance of all concerned authorities, including the Graduate School) make a final determination regarding the nature of the opportunity, and remain consistent with all students engaging in the opportunity. Please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate School if there are questions about the nature of an opportunity.

Stipend Rates
- Ph.D. minimum required stipend rate: $12,500 / semester ($25,000 / academic year)

Appointment categories:

Position Title | Responsibilities
---|---
Doctoral Research Assistant (RA) | A Ph.D. student who is typically engaged in laboratory, library, or fieldwork that supports his or her faculty member’s academic research.
Doctoral Teaching Assistant (TA) | A Ph.D. student who assists a faculty member who is the instructor of record for a course. The duties of such an appointment may include work in the classroom, in recitation sections, in laboratories, or in other learning settings. The TA may or may not be responsible for grading student assignments and for maintaining office hours.
Doctoral Teaching Associate (TS) | A Ph.D. student who has primary teaching responsibility for a class under the supervision of the department. The graduate student is the instructor of record for the course.
**Requirements**

- Ph.D. students receiving assistantship must be given full scholarship for the duration of the appointment. The primary responsibility of funding the scholarship lies with the department appointing the Ph.D. student to assistantship. In the case of external awards (e.g. ACLS, NSF), the student’s academic program is required to provide scholarship funding where required by the awarding organization. For example, if NSF requires “the institution” to cover the recipient’s coursework or thesis work, the academic program becomes responsible for providing the funding. The scholarship allocation may be used where appropriate, in accordance with Graduate School policies.

- Ph.D. students must be enrolled full-time for the duration of their award.
- Ph.D. students must receive stipend at the standard rate.
- Ph.D. Assistantship awards must be communicated to the Graduate School via the financial aid budget.

**Restrictions**

- Students may not work more than a combined total of 20 hours per week for the duration of their assistantship. Ph.D. assistantship awards are 15 hours per week, so a student may have an additional job on campus at 5 hours per week.

- Programs may only offer awards one academic year at a time (whether it is a fall and / or spring award). Awards may not be promised or committed for future years.

- The Graduate School does not provide funding in the summer. Individual programs may offer funding independently, but Graduate School funds may not be used.

- Graduate School stipend funds may only be used for merit-based stipend awards to students enrolled in the program. Stipend funds may not be used for any other activity, including scholarship support or to reconcile other accounts.

**Notes on Equity**

While we strive to have “equitable compensation for comparable effort” for such service, this can be difficult to insure in practice across academic programs. The responsibilities of RAs, TAs and TSs vary widely across disciplines. At a minimum, we expect programs to keep the service comparable within their own courses.

That said, if a particular program creates a different experience that is beyond the traditional service responsibilities of an RA, TA or TS, then extra compensation can be warranted. If the responsibilities exceed the norm for assistantships in your program, extra compensation should be awarded. However, the Graduate School allocation may not be used for any compensation / support beyond the standard stipend level. Any amount exceeding the standard rate must be covered by a non-allocation, non-GSAS source. The source may be used to cover that entire stipend, or only the difference between the standard rate and the program’s offer.

**Procedural Notes**

- The student’s appointment is entered into the Payroll system.
- Payment is distributed directly to the student.
- Programs may see stipend payments by checking the Payroll Journal Transactions report for the cost center.
• Programs should ensure their administrators have access to view activity on the stipend allocation cost center.

**Fellowship (Non-Service)**

Graduate School Fellowship awards are stipends with no service obligation. Students do not work or serve in exchange for the fellowship stipend. These stipends allow students to fully engage in their own academic work or research for the duration of the award.

At times, the distinction between assistantship (service) and fellowship (non-service) may be difficult to discern, depending on the opportunity offered. For assistantships, the service provided by the student primarily benefits others (faculty, other students, etc.). Although the service may be related to the student’s own academic endeavors, the service supports projects driven by others. If one particular student were not available to provide the service, the project would most likely continue with or without the service of another student. For fellowship stipends, the student’s efforts are focused on their own academic pursuits towards the completion of their degree. If one particular student were not here, the program might distribute the fellowship stipend to a different student, whose research and project might be completely different.

Most importantly, programs must ensure consistency. In cases where the distinction between service/non-service is unclear for a particular opportunity, it is essential that the program (with the guidance of all concerned authorities, including the Graduate School) make a final determination regarding the nature of the opportunity, and remain consistent with all students engaging in the opportunity. Please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate School if there are questions about the nature of an opportunity.

**Stipend Rates**

• Ph.D. minimum required stipend rate: $12,500 / semester  ($25,000 / academic year)

**Requirements**

• Ph.D. students receiving fellowship stipend must be given full scholarship for the duration of the award. The primary responsibility of funding the scholarship lies with the department providing the fellowship stipend to the Ph.D. student. In the case of external awards (e.g. ACLS, NSF), the student’s academic program is required to provide scholarship funding where required by the awarding organization. For example, if ACLS requires “the institution” to cover the recipient’s coursework or thesis work, the academic program becomes responsible for providing the funding. The scholarship allocation may be used where appropriate, in accordance with Graduate School policies.

• Ph.D. students must be enrolled full-time for the duration of their award.

• Ph.D. students must receive stipend at the standard rate, at minimum.

• All fellowship awards must be communicated to the Graduate School via the financial aid budget.

**Restrictions**

• Students may not work / serve at Georgetown for the duration of the fellowship award. For non-Georgetown University fellowship awards (e.g. FLAS) the program should check the requirements. If the award allows the student to serve and the student wishes to serve, then the award should be processed as an assistantship rather than a non-service stipend.
• Programs may only offer awards one academic year at a time (whether it is a fall and/or spring award). Awards may not be promised or committed for future years.
• The Graduate School does not provide funding in the summer. Individual programs may offer funding independently, but Graduate School funds may not be used.
• Graduate School stipend funds may only be used for merit-based stipend awards to students enrolled in the program. Stipend funds may not be used for any other activity, including scholarship support or to reconcile other accounts.

Procedural Notes
• Ph.D. fellowship appointments are entered into the Banner system and disbursed to the student’s account. After all mandatory, non-mandatory fees, or additional charges have been absorbed by the Ph.D. fellowship stipend, Ph.D. student may request a refund as outlined on the Office of Billing and Payment Services website here: http://studentaccounts.georgetown.edu/faq#request2.
• Master’s fellowship appointments are entered into the GMS system and processed via the Office of Accounts Payable or the Tax Department, depending on the student’s citizenship and residency.
• Payment is distributed directly to the student.
• Programs may review stipend payments by checking the GMS BAR (Budget to Actuals) report and the GMS Non-Payroll Journal Transactions report.
• Programs should ensure their administrators have access to view activity on the stipend allocation cost center.

5-Year Funding Policy

• All incoming students matriculating with merit-based financial aid in the form of full scholarship and full stipend must be offered five years of continuous full funding as long as they continue to make satisfactory progress towards their Graduate School degree. Such commitments are called 5-year commitments or 5-year promise awards.
• All awards are merit-based and, as such, require continuous successful academic progress.
• Any Ph.D. student may be awarded scholarship and stipend on the allocation accounts during their first 5 years of study in the program.
• Scholarship funding from the allocation may be extended to any Ph.D. student in their 6th or 7th year of study in the program.
• Stipend funding may only be used for students in the first 5 years of study in the program.

Exception: 5-year-commitment students who brought in funding support as the result of their own efforts (e.g., recipients of Fulbright or NSF fellowships) may be provided stipend and scholarship support during a sixth or seventh year, up to a maximum of five years of GSAS.
support. The external grant must be obtained by the individual student and does not include grant support brought in by a faculty member, PI, or Graduate School grant, nor does it include assistantships or fellowships offered by other departments or campuses of Georgetown University.

- GSAS funds cannot be awarded to a student who has been enrolled for more than seven years.

Eligibility for students matriculating into dual degree programs (e.g. M.A. + Ph.D., J.D. + Ph.D.) extends in the same manner as their time to degree. However, they may still only receive a total of five years of GSAS full funding.

For example, a student matriculating into an M.A. + Ph.D. dual degree program will be eligible to receive full scholarship and stipend during a period of SIX years from point of matriculation, rather than a window of only five years. However, they may only use a total of five years (ten semesters) of full scholarship + stipend support during that six year period.

Similarly, a student matriculating into a J.D. + Ph.D. dual degree program will be eligible to receive full scholarship and stipend during a period of SEVEN years from point of matriculation, rather than a window of only five years. However, they may only use a total of five years (ten semesters) of full scholarship + stipend support during that seven year period.

Opportunities from Other Departments

In addition to traditional financial aid awards from academic programs, other departments, even ones that do not have academic programs, offer opportunities to graduate students. It is important for these departments to keep in mind that they are expected to abide by all of the same policies and procedures mentioned in this document during the academic year.

Most offers take the form of Ph.D. assistantships, whether they are research assistantships, teaching assistantships or opportunities for students to lead their own courses by serving as Teaching Associates. Other offers may take the form of fellowship stipends or scholarships. In such cases, the department must take the following steps to setup their opportunity with the Graduate School and process the award:

1. Contact the Graduate School early to make sure you are aware of the general policies and procedures, as well as any recent updates.
2. Contact each student’s academic program to inform them of your plans. This is extremely important, as it affects the funding decisions and budget planning of the student’s academic program.
3. Use the financial aid budget to succinctly list all of the graduate students your department intends to fund.
4. For scholarship-only awards – Create an award letter to the student that includes the following:
   a. Duration of award
   b. Amount of scholarship
   c. Signatures / Consent of both parties
5. For Ph.D. assistantship stipends – Create a work agreement with the student that includes the following:
   a. Type of Appointment (Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant, Teaching Associate)
   b. Duration of appointment (e.g. Fall and Spring, Fall-only, Spring-only, Summer)
6. For fellowship stipends – Create an award letter to the student that includes the following:
   a. Duration of award
   b. Amount of stipend
   c. Amount of scholarship (for Ph.D. students only)
   d. Signatures / Consent of both parties

7. Send copies of award letters / work agreements to the Graduate School

8. Complete any necessary paperwork with the student and forward to the appropriate offices for processing.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate School should you have any questions about the policies and procedures.

Additional Reminders

- Ph.D. funds (both stipend and/or scholarship) from the Graduate School allocation cannot be used to support Master’s students.
- Scholarships will only be posted up to one week after the add/drop date. Any posting after that time will be done on an exception basis.
- Scholarship support is only to be used for those courses that are required as part of the student’s degree. Any courses taken outside of the degree requirements are the responsibility of the student.
- If a student withdraws from a course outside the Add/Drop period, the scholarship is pulled, and the student is responsible for the remaining balance.
- If a student withdraws from the program after the Add/Drop period, the scholarship is pulled, and the student is responsible for the remaining balance. The stipend will also be terminated at the corresponding effective date.
- Policies for merit-based aid are aligned with the policies in the Graduate Bulletin. Please be sure to reference the bulletin regularly, as it will greatly assist in appropriately managing the academic careers of graduate students. The Graduate Bulletin is available at:
  https://sites.google.com/a/georgetown.edu/gsas-graduate-bulletin/
Resources

Financial aid policies and procedures are posted online for students, directors and administrators.

Sites for Students and General Audiences

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Link</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School Financial Aid Site - Main</td>
<td><a href="http://grad.georgetown.edu/financial-support">http://grad.georgetown.edu/financial-support</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Scholarships</td>
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<td>Tax Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helpful Resources</td>
<td><a href="http://grad.georgetown.edu/financial-support/administrative-tools">http://grad.georgetown.edu/financial-support/administrative-tools</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Council of Graduate Schools’ Resolution</td>
<td><a href="http://grad.georgetown.edu/financial-support">http://grad.georgetown.edu/financial-support</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>For incoming students who receive their offers during the admit w/ aid period</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Sites for Directors and Administrators

*These websites are HIDDEN. Please BOOKMARK them in your browsers.

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<td>Home Page for Directors &amp; Admins</td>
<td><a href="http://gradadmin.georgetown.edu/index.php/Financial_Aid">http://gradadmin.georgetown.edu/index.php/Financial_Aid</a></td>
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