

Types of Awards

Scope: Who is Covered by this Policy?

Graduate Students

Policy

Graduate Assistantships Appointments

Graduate assistantships are awards given to students who are working toward a master's degree (or equivalent, i.e., 34 credit hours in the doctoral program), a Specialist in Education degree, or the doctoral degree. The stipend associated with this award is for a maximum of halftime duties (20 hours) in two regular semesters. Graduate assistants with half-time duties for two semesters are granted remission of 93% of the graduate comprehensive fee for the period of appointment and for the summer session immediately preceding or following the year of appointment. The student will also be required to pay technology, facilities and metro fees. A tuition waiver and stipend for a graduate assistantship can vary with the work expectations varying proportionally. For instance a student might receive half of a tuition waiver and half of a normal stipend, and would be expected to work half the hours. An assistantship may be offered in full, three-quarters, half, or one-quarter increments. A student may also be awarded a tuition waiver only (no stipend), with no assistantship expectation. However, students may not be awarded a stipend only as all stipends must be accompanied by a fee waiver.

Academic year appointments begin one week before classes start in the fall semester and end on the last day of final exams during spring semester.

Fall semester appointments begin one week before classes start in fall semester and end on the last day of final exams during fall semester. Spring semester appointments - effective date is determined by duties

- Instructional duties – begin the first day of spring semester and end on the last day of final exams during fall semester.
- Research duties – begin the Monday after New Year’s and end on the last day of final exams during spring semester.
- Administrative duties – begin the Monday after New Year’s and end on the last day of final exams during spring semester.

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Graduate assistants may also be eligible to receive Graduate Summer Scholarships or Graduate Summer Research Fellowships (see the sections of this policy titled “Graduate Summer Scholarships” and “Graduate Summer Research Fellowships” below).

Duties of Graduate Assistants

It is the policy of Miami University that graduate assistants will work an assigned number of hours per week based on their appointment. The duties and hours worked per week are determined by the appointment and are set out in the letter the student receives from Academic Personnel offering the assistantship.

- Instructional duties: 20 hours per week for 17 weeks (fall) and 16 weeks (spring)
- Research duties: 18 hours per week for 17 weeks (fall), 3 weeks (winter), 16 weeks (spring).
- Administrative duties: 18 hours per week for 17 weeks (fall), 3 weeks (winter), 16 weeks (spring).

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(hours pro-rated for appointments if less than these listed hours per week)

The work assignments will have a clear educational benefit and will be consistent with the awardee’s professional aspirations. Any student who feels that he or she is being asked to work more than the expected hours or whose work assignment consists of a disproportionate amount of clerical and administrative tasks, who has discussed his or her concerns with the appropriate director of graduate studies or supervisor, and who has availed himself or herself of the appropriate departmental grievance procedures without satisfaction should approach the appropriate divisional dean to request a review of the work assignment.

If the award holder is not satisfied by the response of the divisional dean, the award holder should meet with the Dean of the Graduate School, who will first discuss the problem with the divisional dean and the supervisor of the graduate student. If the Dean of the Graduate School is unable to resolve the problem, he or she will appoint an ad hoc subcommittee of the Graduate Council to adjudicate the problem. The decision of the ad hoc subcommittee will be binding on the student and the department or program involved, and there will be no further appeal.

A student's primary commitment is to his or her studies. Thus, students are prohibited from working more than 28 hours per week during the academic year. International students may not work more than 20 hours per week.

Winter Term Duties Defined

Graduate assistants may or may not be required to be present and complete assistantship duties during winter term. Department chairs or unit supervisors will determine the duties, if any, for their graduate assistants during winter term.

If a graduate assistant does not have duties as assigned by the department or unit supervisor during the winter term, he/she may be paid for an overload assignment; no petition is required.

If a graduate assistant does have duties as assigned by the department or unit supervisor during the winter term, he/she must petition Graduate Council for approval before accepting an overload assignment.

Holding Additional Employment

Graduate students on full assistantship duties during the academic year (18-20 hours per week) may not hold an additional position at the university during the period of their appointment, unless recommended by the department chair and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The award holder must file a petition with the Graduate School to seek approval.

- Graduate Assistants enrolled during the academic year may work up to 40 hours per week during periods without assistantship duties (e.g., break periods, Winter Term or Summer) if enrolled for less than six (6) credit hours.
- Graduate Assistants with a partial assistantship may hold additional positions up to a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year.

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- Graduate Assistants' average weekly hours cannot exceed 27 hours for the academic year.

Residence Hall Assistants

Students who hold residence hall assistantships and who must determine their own time schedules will at times work more than twenty hours a week. However, the Office of Residence Life recognizes that its award holders will place their highest priority on their academic performance.

First-year Graduate Assistants

First-year graduate assistants are not assigned complete responsibility for classroom instruction unless need is demonstrated, the assistant has the necessary competence, and approval is obtained from the divisional dean and the Dean of the Graduate School.

First-year international students awarded assistantships whose native language is not English or who have not earned a degree from an institution in a country where English is the native language will not be assigned significant instructional responsibilities (including laboratory supervision) in their first year of graduate study at Miami (i.e., they can assist a faculty member or senior graduate assistant, but they cannot be given lead or principal responsibility for a class, a discussion session, or a laboratory section), with the exception of students teaching in the foreign languages area in their native language. The following are additional guidelines for international graduate assistants:

- State-supported colleges and universities are required to ensure that instruction by teaching assistants is provided only by persons who have demonstrated oral proficiency in use of the English language.
- Each state University shall establish a program to assess the oral English language proficiency of teaching assistants providing classroom instruction to students.
- Each state University shall ensure that teaching assistants who are not orally proficient in the English language attain such proficiency prior to providing classroom instruction to students.
- The Board of Trustees has authorized the Dean of the Graduate School to administer a program to assess the oral English proficiency of foreign graduate students who have been assigned instructional responsibilities as graduate assistants or teaching fellows. This assessment program shall include the following:

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- Administration of a standardized test of oral English proficiency, such as the “Test of Spoken English” developed by the Educational Testing Service.
- Establishment of minimum scores on such a standardized test judged to demonstrate acceptable levels of oral English proficiency.
- Requirement of a course or courses of study to assist foreign graduate students who are identified as having oral English deficiencies prior to assuming assigned instructional responsibilities.

Academic Requirements of Graduate Assistants

In addition to the responsibilities outlined by their major department, graduate assistants ordinarily must register for a minimum of nine (9) graduate credit hours and a maximum of eighteen (18) hours for each semester of their appointment. With permission students may take undergraduate hours in addition to the minimum number of required graduate credit hours.

Students must maintain satisfactory progress toward the graduate degree. Satisfactory progress means carrying no fewer than the minimum number of graduate hours, maintaining a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00, and fulfilling academic requirements for the degree as determined by their department.

Dissertation Scholarships

Dissertation scholarships are awarded to doctoral candidates who are selected by the individual departments. This selection is based on the merits of the student’s proposed dissertation and the probability of the doctoral degree being awarded within the year (by the following August). These are service-free awards administered through the Office of Student Financial Aid. The department offering the award determines stipends for dissertation scholarships.

Dissertation scholars also are eligible for Graduate Summer Scholarships or Graduate Summer Research Fellowships (see the sections of this policy titled “Graduate Summer Scholarships” and “Graduate Summer Research Fellowships” below.)

Limitations of Dissertation Scholarships

Holding a Dissertation Scholarship dramatically reduces a student’s eligibility for Stafford Loans. A Dissertation Scholarship is truly a scholarship because it requires no duties and has no financial payback. Therefore, it is not considered financial aid by the

accepted definition. This award is not for students who are dependent upon the stipend of the Dissertation Scholarship and a Stafford Loan because they would probably forfeit all but approximately \$300 from a Stafford Loan. It is always advisable to speak with a Loan Coordinator from the Office of Student Financial Assistance to determine a total financial aid package. Other information is available online at <https://miamioh.edu/onestop/>.

Dissertation Scholarships are not tax-free awards. Only that portion which a student uses to pay required fees books, supplies, and equipment is non-taxable. The remainder is taxable. Detailed information about the award is provided with the letter of appointment.

Academic Requirements of Dissertation Scholars

In addition to the responsibilities outlined by their major department, dissertation scholars must register for 9-15 graduate credit hours in each of the two regular semesters. If their degree is not awarded at the May commencement, students must register for a total of 9-15 graduate credit hours during the summer terms; remission of the Instructional Fee and the out-of-state tuition surcharge (if applicable) also applies to the summer terms, but not to winter term. Dissertation scholars do not need to register during winter term.

Students must maintain satisfactory progress toward the graduate degree. Satisfactory progress means carrying no fewer than the minimum number of graduate hours, maintaining a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00, and fulfilling academic requirements for the degree as determined by their department.

Graduate Summer Research Fellowships (Students who started Fall of 2020)

The purpose of [the](#) Graduate Summer Research Fellowship is to provide financial support for full-time graduate students to engage in meaningful scholarly activities during a 6-week summer period. The summer research fellowship is intended for students who have no additional means of summer support during the six-week summer period (e.g., grant-funded assistantship; external, paid internships; teaching

assignments, etc.). The awarding of these fellowships areis competitive and subject to availability of funds.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Graduate Summer Research Fellowship, a student must have fulfilled the following requirements:

- Student held a full-time (18-20 hours per week) graduate assistantship, a residence hall personnel assistantship, or a dissertation/fellowship scholarship for at least one full semester during the fall or spring semester preceding the summer research fellowship period.
- Student completed at least nine (9) graduate credit hours in each of the two semesters prior to the summer research fellowship period.
- Student has made satisfactory progress toward the graduate degree, including:
 - ~~Met the Graduate School's requirement of a 3.0 GPA~~
 - Earned a 3.0 GPA or above (cumulative and in each of the fall and spring semesters prior to the summer research fellowship period)
 - Met departmental milestones on time, including for example: plan of study, research proposal defense, and comprehensive exams, etc. The completion of milestones needs to be documented by the student's department or program
- Student must not be receiving additional Miami University funded support, from the following sources:
 - Externally-funded research assistantship that already pays the student in the summer
 - Full-time, paid external internship that already pays the student in the summer
 - Teaching course(s) in the summer and the student was paid for teaching the course(s)
- Student must either:
 - be pursuing a thesis master's program, specialist program, or doctoral program; or

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- o be enrolled in a program that has a required research project of experience

- Student must be engaged in meaningful research activity as described below in Fellowship expectations

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Time Limits

- Master thesis-track (and specialist-track) students are eligible for a total of two years of summer support.
- PhD candidates are eligible for a total of four years of summer support including their years as master's degree candidates.

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Maximum Number of Awards

Up to 300 graduate summer research fellowships will be awarded per academic year pending available funds.

Fellowship Expectations

The student must commit to a minimum of 6 weeks of full-time summer study for the activities described below:

- Student must be engaged in one or more of the following meaningful activities over the summer they receive support:
 - o Research activities related to degree requirements that will result in a publication, completion of thesis/dissertation and requirements, or provide preliminary data for grant applications
 - o Mentoring of undergraduate students in research
 - o Other important activities related to degree completion (e.g., unpaid research-related internships or research independent studies)
- Students must either:
 - o For students whose degree programs encourage summer session credits, register for 0–9 credit thesis or dissertation hours during the first summer session.
 - o Students who do not need summer session credits to graduate in a timely manner are encouraged to enroll in a 0 credit-hour internship or independent study (i.e., thesis or dissertation credits).

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Note: Courses taken for P, S, and ~~XCR1~~ grades count toward eligibility for the summer research fellowship; they are not, however, computed in students' grade point averages. Students who receive F, U, or ~~YNCR~~ in such courses will not receive credit towards the summer research fellowship.

Through an online Graduate School form, students are required to submit a 1 paragraph description of what was accomplished to the Graduate School before the start of fall semester classes. Students who do not submit this description will not be eligible to apply for a future Graduate Summer Research Fellowship.

Full-Time Summer Study Defined

Full time study for graduate students is defined as 20 hours per week to fulfill the fellowship expectations (see above).

Graduate Summer Research Fellowship Payments

Eligible students who are selected for fellowship will receive \$1,500 (if GA for 2 semesters) or \$750 (if GA for 1 semester) for engaging in full-time study as defined by the Graduate School and their academic department. The Graduate Summer Research Fellowship does not come with a tuition waiver; therefore, if a student chooses to register for more than 0 credit hours in the summer, they are responsible for paying all tuition and fees unless their division or department decides to cover these.

Summer Research Fellowships will be paid on or before June 30th.

~~The Instructional Fee and out-of-state tuition surcharge (if applicable) for summer terms are waived for Graduate Summer Research Fellowship recipients. Therefore, the General Fee (reduced) and the Registration Fee must be paid at the time in which students register or are billed. If required in their courses, students must pay certain laboratory fees and artistic supply costs. All fees must be paid by the deadlines established by the One Stop to avoid cancellation of students' registration and loss of their Graduate Summer Research Fellowship.~~

Processing of Graduate Summer Research Fellowships

~~Program-based ranked lists of all eligible Graduate students will who wish to be submitted to the Graduate School by May 1st. Based on availability of funds, each~~

~~program will be notified as to the number of considered for a Graduate Summer Research Fellowships that will be awarded to that program. Fellowship must apply through an online Graduate School form no later than February 1 for the upcoming summer. Late submissions of ranked lists will not be accepted.~~

~~Departments are required considered. The Graduate School will share the application data with graduate programs and work with them to verify the eligibility of and select the students and fulfillment of expectations for who will receive the research fellowship. Departments may have to forfeit future research fellowships Graduate Summer Fellowship (incorporating feedback or ranked lists from the graduate program if they allow for the awarding of research fellowships to ineligible students choose to provide them). When more eligible students apply than there is funding to support, the following may be used to select recipients:~~

- ~~a. ranked lists submitted by the graduate program;~~
- ~~b. the importance and impact of the proposed activities as described in the application; and~~
- ~~c. whether the student has received a Graduate Summer Research Fellowship previously (those who have not will be prioritized).~~

~~Students will be notified as soon as possible in the spring semester if they are receiving a Graduate Summer Research Fellowship.~~

Graduate Summer Scholarships (Students who started Prior to Fall of 2020)

Graduate Summer Scholarships are service-free awards given to graduate award holders in the summer following their graduate appointments.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Graduate Summer Scholarship, students must have held a graduate assistantship, a residence hall personnel assistantship, or a dissertation scholarship for at least one full semester. Students must also have completed at least nine (9) graduate credit hours each semester of the appointment or have done one of the following:

To be eligible for a Graduate Summer Scholarship, students must also have fulfilled the following academic requirements:

- Made satisfactory progress toward the graduate degree.
- Be certified as engaged in full-time graduate study by one's department.

Courses taken for P and S grades count toward eligibility for the summer scholarship; they are not, however, computed in students' grade point averages. Students who receive F, U, or Y in such courses will not receive credit towards the summer scholarship.

Summer Scholarship Payments

Eligible students will receive \$900 or \$1,800 for engaging in full-time study as defined by the Graduate School and their academic department between the end of spring semester and the beginning of fall semester; the maximum scholarship payment is \$1,800. Students with one-semester appointments are eligible for one payment of \$900. Students with a two-semester appointment are eligible for the summer scholarship for one payment in the amount of \$1800. There is no partial payment of scholarships. If students have used all or part of their summer fee waiver in the summer proceeding the year of the appointment, they cannot receive additional fee waivers during the following summer term.

Summer Scholarships will be paid on or before June 30th.

The Instructional Fee and out-of-state tuition surcharge (if applicable) for summer terms are waived for Graduate Summer Scholarship recipients. The Graduate Summer Scholarship provides a scholarship only. Therefore, the General Fee (reduced) and the Registration Fee must be paid at the time in which students register or are billed. If required in their courses, students must pay certain laboratory fees and artistic supply costs. All fees must be paid by the deadlines established by the One Stop to avoid cancellation of students' registration and loss of their Graduate Summer Scholarship.

Full-Time Summer Study Defined

Departments are responsible for defining what full-time summer study entails for each degree program. Full-time summer study may range from three (3) to twelve (12) credit hours for the entire summer and must require student engagement in degree requirements for at least ten (10) weeks of the summer, or five (5) weeks for a single scholarship payment. A department's definition of full-time summer study must be approved by the Graduate School in order for its students to be eligible for the Graduate Summer Scholarship.

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Departments are responsible for certifying that each student is enrolled in the appropriate courses and engaged in the appropriate activities (credit or non-credit activities) during the summer (minimum of ten weeks) in order for its students to receive the Graduate Summer Scholarship.

If students receive a Graduate Summer Scholarship, they may hold additional employment for up to twenty (20) hours a week during the summer semester, provided that they have permission from their department chair and the Graduate School.

Related Form(s)

Not Applicable.

Additional Resources and Procedures

Not Applicable.

FAQ

Not Applicable.

Policy Administration

Next Review Date

7/1/2023

Responsible Officer

Legal Authority

Not Applicable.

Compliance Policy

No

Revision History

Amended July 2021; Edited November 2021; [Amended August 2023](#)

Reference ID

Graduate Handbook 3.2

Reviewing Bodies

Administrative

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