

The George Washington University

GRADUATE AWARD REQUIREMENTS

The George Washington University is pleased to offer you an award to assist you in completing your graduate degree at our university. Listed below are the conditions under which this award is made as well as general information on awards.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

The awardee must:

1. Officially accept the award online by the deadline date stated in the award communication, indicating intent to accept the award and its conditions.
2. Enroll in a graduate degree program in the department as awarded (full-time study requires at least nine (9) credit hours per semester). Any registration of less than that stated in your award letter must be approved by your Dean's office, with final approval resting with the awarding office. Note that transfers to another school or department will likely invalidate this award.
3. Meet the academic performance requirements of the department and school, as awarded.
4. **Accept full responsibility**, unless the award letter states otherwise, **for covering the costs of the following charges upon registration:**
 - a. the Student Association fee,
 - b. tuition charges above the tuition award, if awarded one,
 - c. late registration fees, late payment fees,
 - d. special course-related fees,
 - e. the matriculation fee for incoming students, and
 - f. the thesis or dissertation fee.

The awardee will also be liable for any payment due and charges for courses that are (1) not on the awardee's program of study or (2) not taken for credit. If the awardee drops a course once the semester has begun and does not replace it with another approved course carrying the same number of credit hours, the tuition award will be withdrawn, and the awardee will be liable for any penalty payment(s) due. Consortium courses are permitted if the particular course is NOT offered at GW and if the Consortium course is included in the awardee's official program of study.

5. Unless the award letter states otherwise, only courses on the Foggy Bottom Campus and the Virginia Science and Technology Campus are covered by the award. Tuition for courses at other sites or online are the awardee's responsibility.
6. Awardees who are or who subsequently become benefited employees of GW are not eligible to receive fellowships, graduate assistantships or graduate research assistantships, and awards made earlier will be rescinded.

CONDITIONS OF ASSISTANTSHIPS

1. Discuss expected duties related to the services portion of your award with your awarding department, faculty supervisor or principal investigator as soon as possible after accepting the award, and satisfactorily fulfill these responsibilities.
2. Complete the appropriate tax forms and Employment Eligibility Verification process (also known as I-9 verification). For more information on the I-9 process, please [visit this link](#).
3. **If you are an international student**, hold an appropriate visa (F-1) to accept an appointment as a Graduate Assistant (GA) or Graduate Research Assistant (GRA).
4. For first-time GAs and GRAs, agree to undergo a limited [background check](#). The process involves a criminal background check and a check of the sex offender database. Failure to pass the checks may result in award rescission.
5. For first-time GAs at GW:
 - a. Prior to beginning the semester, successfully complete the Graduate Teaching Assistant Program (GTAP) Online Orientation in your first semester of appointment.
 - b. Successfully complete and pass the online GTAP Certification Course UNIV 0250 (a one-credit-hour course) in your first semester of appointment (Fall or Spring). As a participant in the GTAP program, the Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships (OGSAF) will automatically enroll you in the course. There is no charge associated with this class.
 - c. Participate in an Oral English Proficiency Screening (OEPS) at GW prior to the beginning of the semester **if native language is not English**. OGSAF will set up the screening. Awardees who do not pass the language screening will be required to attend accent modification sessions in the Speech and Hearing Clinic for the semester, and for that semester not be allowed interaction with students in a teaching capacity.
6. Awardees may not hold more than one assistantship (GA and/or GRA) concurrently or hold an assistantship in combination with an hourly wage job, unless together they total no more than 20 hours per week.

CONDITIONS OF FELLOWSHIPS

1. Students holding a fellowship or assistantship from GW in the amount of \$8,000 or more for a semester must not hold other employment inside or outside GW. "Employment" is defined as internships or any other miscellaneous employment that is not part of the fellowship or assistantship. However, under exceptional circumstances, students may apply for and be granted permission to work by completing the [Request for Permission to Work form](#).
2. One form of fellowship is a stipend: a cash payment to support a student's academic study, for which no services can be required. Stipend fellowships are paid on the **first** business day of the month. Stipends can be electronically deposited in a U.S. bank or picked up by the awardees at their academic or awarding departments. It is strongly encouraged that stipend awardees set up direct deposit to expedite receipt of stipend payments.
3. A second form of fellowship is a tuition award: a payment directly to a student's account to cover, wholly or partially, the cost of tuition. Tuition fellowships are credited directly to the awardee's account at the beginning of each semester *after* the awardee has accepted the award *and* has registered for the required credits. These awards cover the cost of tuition for course work that is credited towards the awardee's graduate degree program, up to the total amount of the award (Normally, no more than nine (9) credit-hours per semester, for a maximum of eighteen (18) credit hours per academic year). Any portion of the tuition award that is not used within the academic year is forfeited and cannot be converted to cash. The academic year includes the fall and spring semesters.
4. The University defines full-time study as a minimum of nine credits per semester. Part-time is defined for awarding purposes as a minimum of six credits per semester, unless the award letter specifically states that less than six credits is allowable relative to applying the award.
5. Other fellowships or scholarship awards must be reported to the awarding school or department, where a decision will be made as to whether all or part of both awards may be kept. Substantial stipends cannot be stacked and tuition award totals cannot exceed the tuition charges. There are some tuition awards that are never stackable.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Assistantship awards are usually made for the full academic year. Responsibilities vary among departments, but work must average no more than 20 hours per week, and may include assisting teaching, grading papers, or teaching laboratory sections, assisting with writing grants and some research or administrative assistance related to the students' academic programs, as examples.

Assistantship salary payments may vary by school, department or sponsored project and include: a payment for providing teaching, research or administrative assistance related to the awardees' academic program. (Students providing total research support for a professor must be hired as GRAs.) Assistantship salary checks are issued on the **last** business day of each month, beginning on the first day of a month and ending on the last day of a month. Checks can be electronically deposited in a U.S. bank or mailed to a student's local address if direct deposit is not set up.

GW STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE-RELATED PAYMENTS

All graduate students will be automatically enrolled in the GW Student Health Insurance Plan and will need to opt out if they do not wish to retain this coverage. The insurance charge will be added to their student account.

GW will grant GAs, GRAs, and Fellows who receive full packages (\$16,000 in stipend/salary combination, stipend, or salary only for master's students and \$20,000 in stipend/salary combination, stipend, or salary only for doctoral students per academic year) a special payment to be used toward the cost of GW student health insurance for each academic semester enrolled. Once OGSAF receives information that the student is enrolled, the Office will put an award on the student's account for each academic semester enrolled. Eligible for this payment are GAs, GRAs, and Fellows in the following schools: CCAS, CPS, ESIA, GSEHD, GWSB, SEAS and SON. For details on the GW student health plan, click [here](#).

SICK TIME

Sick time provides GA and GRA awardees with paid time off to take care of their basic health and safety needs as well as those of their family members.

Sick time begins accruing on the date of hire and any accrued but unused sick time can be used during employment with manager approval. Accrued sick time is credited on the last working day of each month and may not be used prior to its actual accrual.

SICK TIME ACCRUAL

- GAs and GRAs accrue sick time at a rate of 2.25 hours each month up to 20 hours per year and can carry over up to their maximum annual accrual of sick time each year.

TRACKING SICK TIME

- Sick Time is tracked via Kronos at go.gwu.edu/trs. More information about Kronos, including video tutorials and reference guides, is available at benefits.gwu.edu/timeoff.

For sick time policy information please visit the Time Off and Leave Guide found at benefits.gwu.edu/timeoff. Please refer only to the sick time sections specific to Graduate Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants, beginning on page 11. You can also contact Benefits at timeoff@gwu.edu for questions related to sick time.

AWARD RENEWABILITY

All awards are based on academic excellence. Depending upon the policy of the school or awarding department, awards may be extended or renewed. Awardees should contact the awarding school or department for the maximum length of time an award can be held for masters and doctoral candidates. The length of the award should be specified in the award letter. Renewal is **not always** automatic, and each awardee **may have to reapply** through his or her respective awarding office to be considered for the following year. Awardees should check with the awarding school, department or Sponsored Project Principal Investigation (PI) for renewability information. Awards on sponsored projects are also subject to the availability of funding.

AWARD TERMINATION

All or part of the award may be rescinded at any time if the conditions of award as described above are not met, or if poor academic progress or unsatisfactory performance in the assistantship role warrants it. Generally, prior to rescission, the program will endeavor to inform the awardee of his/her inadequacies, provide suggestions for improvement and a timeline for addressing deficiencies, offer additional assistance and/or mentoring, and/or suggest resources to aid the awardee's improvement. If no improvement takes place within the time allowed, the department will request the Dean's office to send the awardee a written notification that the award will be rescinded, with a stated effective date. However, the University reserves the right to rescind an award including all parts immediately and without prior notice if, in the judgment of the Department Chair or Awarding Department and concurrence of the Dean, such action is warranted. While the University is not required to withhold taxes on stipends awarded to domestic students, they are reportable as income and students should report them on their income tax returns.

TAX IMPLICATIONS

COUNCIL ON GRADUATE SCHOOLS RESOLUTION REGARDING GRADUATE SCHOLARS, FELLOWS, TRAINEES, AND ASSISTANTS

Acceptance of an offer of financial support (such as graduate scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship) for the next academic year by a prospective or enrolled graduate student completes an agreement that both student and graduate school expect to honor. In that context, the conditions affecting such offers and their acceptance must be defined carefully and understood by all parties.

Students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15; earlier deadlines for acceptance of such offers violate the intent of this Resolution. In those instances in which a student accepts an offer before April 15, and subsequently desires to withdraw that acceptance, the student may submit in writing a resignation of the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which the commitment has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer. It is further agreed by the institutions and organizations subscribing to the above Resolution that a copy of this Resolution should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistantship offer.

It is the responsibility of the awardee to understand the federal and state income tax implications of receiving an assistantship. The University withholds tax on the salary portion of the award. The Tax Department's website (<http://taxdepartment.gwu.edu/>) provides general information to assist students in determining tax liability and reporting obligations.