

**Guidelines for the Allocation and Award of Graduate Student Support
Funding, beginning 2007-08
September 28, 2006**

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Dean of Graduate Studies**

The following Guidelines aim to address the institution-wide problem of non-competitive stipends for doctoral students in a resource climate in which we are not anticipating major additional resources for graduate student support funding. The level of detail attempts to create general principles by which everyone can abide; at the same time, we recognize that every graduate program has its own uniqueness and inevitably even the most well-intentioned Guidelines will need to be flexible enough on occasion to accommodate programmatic differences.

- I. General Principles
 - A. "Graduate Student Support Funding" refers to any combination of stipends and tuition scholarship money allocated to units from state resources and offered to new and continuing graduate students.
 - B. All state-allocated funding as defined in I.A. is subject to guidelines.
 - C. "Targeted funds" previously allocated to the Deans of the Schools and Colleges will remain available to all domestic graduate students through student application and program nomination to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies for the Diversity Teaching/Research Fellowship instead of being devolved to the Deans, per new SUNY System Administration guidelines (separate from this document) for the award of these funds.
 - D. Units are expected to account to the Dean of Graduate Studies for all state-allocated funding according to guidelines, and to report all externally-funded graduate student support.
 - E. Recruitment of the best doctoral students will receive top priority for the allocation of Graduate Student Support Funding. Incoming students should be informed that it is program policy to continue their funding for the second and subsequent year(s) (depending on the program, this funding may be external) if they make satisfactory progress towards their degree, even though the initial appointment letter they receive will give them a one-year contract.
 - F. Retention and continuation of doctoral students making adequate progress towards their degree and who entered their doctoral program with a funding package will receive equally high priority as recruitment of the best new doctoral students.
 - G. Recruitment for Professional Master's programs based on competitiveness, national/international applicant pool, reputation or impact, and evidence of retention and degree-completion among supported students will receive the next priority. Professional Master's programs at

Albany (e.g., those terminal Master's degrees that do not lead to doctoral programs here or elsewhere, or for which there does not exist a research doctoral program in the field) include the following: MBA, MPA, "MPP," MPH, SSW, MFA, MRP, MSIS, and several programs in the School of Education.

- H. In general, M.A./M.S. students in non-terminal master's programs are not eligible for funding except under the Diversity Teaching/Research Fellowship Program, and except for students in M.A./M.S. programs that have established a reputation based on some national ranking. However, funding to leverage external funding requirements in some Master's programs (e.g., for tuition scholarship \$) or to use Master's recruitment as preliminary to doctoral program enrollment where supported by doctoral matriculation statistics may be allowed. Some first-year Master's students are actually continuing "Fifth-Year Scholar" award recipients, students promised a fifth year of tuition as part of their initial scholarship package for recruitment to the undergraduate program, and are not considered exceptions to this guideline (nor does their funding come from the Graduate Student Support pool).
- I. One standard exception to I.H. is that M.A. and M.S. students (as well as Professional Master's students and doctoral students) may hold full or half administrative graduate assistantships, either at the level of the School/College/Department or in other administrative units.
- J. Doctoral students who enter the University without advanced standing are limited to a total of four years of state allocated Graduate Student Support Funding (but see I.N. and I.O.). Doctoral students who enter with a Master's degree or beyond in a related field (as defined by the program to which they are applying) are eligible for a maximum of 3 years of state funding; doctoral students who enter with a Master's degree in an unrelated field are eligible for a maximum of 4 years of state funding. Master's students, including those holding administrative graduate assistantships and/or pursuing two Master's degrees, may receive a maximum of 2 years of support from state resources and no more than an additional two years of support beyond the Master's for those continuing in Doctoral study. Both Doctoral and Master's-level students who have exhausted their eligibility for Graduate Student Support Funding may be supported as part-time instructors or on external grants.
- K. Doctoral students eligible for state-allocated Graduate Student Support Funding are required to be engaged in full-time study, as defined by University policies (9 credits each semester for full-time GA/TA's, 1 unit of dissertation load credit for doctoral students who have been advanced to candidacy).
- L. Assistants and fellows cannot hold more than one full assistantship or fellowship, and should not engage in additional work beyond the assistantship or fellowship, including part-time lectureships and outside employment, during the term of their appointment. Exceptions based on educational (not financial) need may be authorized by the student's

department chairperson, college/school dean, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

- M. School/College allocations for funding of doctoral students and allocations for funding of Professional Master's students will remain separate and stipends or offers authorized for the funding of doctoral students may not be used to support Master's students, although programs may request approval to move money allocated for Professional Master's support to the support of their doctoral students. For 2007-08, Deans may request some exceptions in extraordinary circumstances involving the historical use of Master's students as Teaching Assistants, but with the understanding that we will work to find another solution to this problem for 2008-09.
- N. Teaching Assistant offers campus-wide for first-year students in the sciences that receive Graduate Student Support Funding must be used as a recruitment tool, not considered the beginning of long-term support. In addition, doctoral programs in the sciences are expected to link the distribution of TA lines for continuing students to a faculty member's success in securing external funding. Students may be assigned to any instructor for the purpose of delivering the undergraduate program, but any research assignment of those students' time must go to research-active and external funding-productive faculty. For purposes of assigning research assistants, the "start-up" packages offered to new faculty should be considered the equivalent of external funding.
- O. In recognition of the support the University provides to the sciences and in order to achieve the outcomes of increased doctoral enrollment and incentives for faculty to pursue external funding, doctoral programs in the sciences are expected to move students onto external funding at the end of 2 years, or earlier as external funding permits.
- P. Out-of-state domestic students may receive out-of-state tuition scholarships for the first year, but must be mentored (and notified) during orientation by the graduate program directors within the Schools and Colleges to take immediate steps to move toward in-state eligibility (a year-long process) so that by their second year they will either become NYS residents or pay the difference between in-state and out-of-state rates. Schools and Colleges may inform out-of-state students that their tuition scholarships for their second and subsequent years will be based on the in-state rate. However, international students who receive tuition scholarships and do not have the option of becoming in-state residents must continue to receive out-of-state tuition scholarships in their second or subsequent years. Programs that place their students in clinical internships on campus are responsible to make certain that international students receive tuition scholarships at the out-of-state (non-resident) rate, or at the same rate at which they were funded when they entered their program.
- Q. In order to be eligible for Graduate Student Support Funding, international students must have a TOEFL score of 600 or above on the paper version, 250 or above on the computer version, or 100 or above on the IBT Internet-based test, or equivalent scores on the IELTS, or present evidence

of at least two years of completion of study at a U.S. college or university, or present evidence that their undergraduate and/or prior graduate education in their home country was conducted in English.

- R. The Dean of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Provost, will develop management procedures for implementing these guidelines, but School/College Deans will have input into all decisions that affect the potential for change in their programs.

II. Priorities for Allocating Funding Based on Guidelines

- A. For 2007-08, bring all doctoral programs up to a base of \$11,000 for all funded doctoral students. Increase by \$1,000 all stipends for students in programs where existing stipends are currently greater than or equal to \$11,000, with the exception of students currently receiving College Scholar stipend enhancements that give them stipends equal to or greater than \$12,000 and students entering in 2006-07 who will already have received a \$1,000 increase if that increase raises their stipend to \$11,000 or more. For those doctoral programs who supplement the student's stipend with summer salary, doctoral program faculty must agree to allow the entire stipend package, including summer salary, to increase by \$1,000, or their students will not be allowed to participate in this funding increase. Programs that do not use the \$1,000 to increase the entire stipend package will be expected to return the money to the central pool administered by the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- B. For 2007-08, find creative ways to support some students in those interdisciplinary programs that admit only to the M.A. (although the terminal degree nationally is the Ph.D.). For example, we might offer such programs "claims" on T.A. lines that they can use to bring doctoral students interested in their programs into their undergraduate classrooms. As an incentive for doctoral programs to allow their students to become TA's for interdisciplinary programs for 1 or more years, these doctoral programs may be allowed to increase the size of their entering doctoral class accordingly. Departments actively involved in moving Ph.D. program proposals through governance may continue to fund Master's students during the transition, with the expectation that once they secure the Ph.D., they will no longer fund M.A. or M.S. students.
- C. For 2007-08, maintain funding for Professional Master's program recruitment at existing levels.
- D. For 2008-09, begin to invest selectively in our strongest doctoral programs as reflected in national metrics such as the NRC study and other measures, as well as in those emerging programs of priority and promise of excellence as identified by the Deans of the Schools/Colleges. As retention/degree-completion/mentoring/external ranking/job placement data support, and in full consultation with the Deans of the Schools and Colleges, allow programs with strong yield and retention data to increase the size of their entering doctoral student class if they wish to do so.

- E. For 2008-09 and thereafter, for those programs who have received College Scholar allotments in the past and have been able to enhance some of their entering stipends, and which can provide data demonstrating doctoral program strength as defined in II.D., use 2006-07 enhanced stipend levels as an aspirational goal for all stipends for entering doctoral students in those programs; within two years, bring all entering doctoral stipends in competitive programs up to 2006-07 College Scholars stipend levels.
- F. For 2008-09, we are exploring the possibility of doing some cost-sharing with Principal Investigators who pay both stipend and tuition for their RA's from external grants. We hope that the Dean of Graduate Studies will be able to return a significant percentage--as much as 50%--of the amount of tuition the PI pays on behalf of the student in the form of a research incentive directly to the PI's department or research center for the PI to use for other direct support for his or her research or graduate students (e.g., summer support, travel, research costs).
- G. In subsequent years, continue to re-evaluate and increase competitive doctoral program base stipends and look for return on selective investments. Make it possible for programs that show potential for competitiveness to develop recruitment and retention goals that will allow them to grow toward strength.
- H. After stabilizing doctoral stipends at a more competitive level, begin to re-evaluate and increase competitive Professional Master's program base allocations.

Based on discussions with faculty from the Graduate Dean's Advisory Group:

Richard Alba, Sociology

David Andersen, Public Administration

James Dias, Biomedical Sciences

Myrna Friedlander, Educational Psychology

Jonathan Mandle, Philosophy

Li Niu, Chemistry

Christopher Thorncroft, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

This version incorporates suggestions for revision from the Provost and from Deans Sue Phillips, Jeffrey Straussman, and Joan Wick-Pelletier and includes a couple of University policies that carry over unchanged.