



GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ASSISTANTSHIP/FELLOWSHIP FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Effective August 1, 2017

CLARIFICATIONS

These guidelines and/or regulations are not applicable to the School of Law.

Use of the titles Teaching Fellow, Teaching Assistant, Instructional Assistant, Research Assistant (which encompasses the following classifications: Research Assistant, Distinguished Doctoral Fellow, Distinguished Art Fellow, Doctoral Fellow, Doctoral Support, Doctoral Bridge Fellow, and Dissertation Writing Support as well as External Fellowships and support as determined on a case by case basis), Graduate Researcher, Studio Assistant, Clinical Assistant, and Graduate Assistant are reserved for graduate students who are awarded a formal assistantship appointment through the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. These positions include possible tuition credit. Appropriate titles for other student workers include Graders, Laboratory Aids, Clerical Aids, etc. These workers may be hired without formal contracts as hourly employees.

Any request for modification or recommendation for termination of an award must be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies with appropriate justification for consideration.

DEFINITIONS

A full graduate stipend requires 20 hours of service per week during the academic year; a partial stipend requires between 10 and 19 hours of service per week. All assistantships and fellowships require a minimum of 10 hours of service per week. The maximum total award a student may receive under an assistantship appointment is twenty hours per week when classes are in session (i.e., until all final semester grades are due) and forty hours per week when classes are not in session.

Full-time enrollment status for a graduate student is registration in nine (9) or more credits per semester toward degree requirements. Part-time enrollment status for a graduate student is registration in fewer than nine (9) credits per semester toward degree requirements.

The academic year starts on September 1 and ends on May 31 of each calendar year (starting and ending dates in contracts go by payroll weeks, which could differ slightly from the academic calendar). Payroll weeks begin on Sunday and end on Saturday. Recommendation forms and contracts will automatically be adjusted to reflect this practice.

Teaching Assistants: matriculated graduate students who serve in the capacity of a Teaching Fellow, Teaching Assistant, or Instructional Assistant for a course which is listed within the course offerings of the University as maintained and posted by the Office of the Registrar.

Teaching Fellow – serves as instructor of record in the course(s) for lecture sections and holds office hours.

Teaching Assistant – teaches lab sessions or leads discussion of a lecture course and holds office hours. Teaching Assistant assignments must lead to a reduction in contact hours for faculty through direct instruction, as in the case of lab instruction, or through reduction of sections by increasing section sizes and holding recitations. Recitation instruction will be regarded as a valid Teaching Assistant assignment for courses with enrollments in excess of fifty (50).

Instructional Assistant - fulfills the duties of a Teaching Fellow or Teaching Assistant and is supported consistent with the stipend requirements of these guidelines but has received assistantship/fellowship support for the maximum time allowable and, is therefore, no longer eligible for assistantship/fellowship benefits.

Research Assistants: matriculated graduate students who conduct research under faculty supervision toward attainment of a graduate degree.

Research Assistants - students who serve or are supported in the following capacities: Distinguished Doctoral Fellow, Distinguished Art Fellow, Doctoral Fellow, Research Assistant, Doctoral Support, Doctoral Bridge Fellow, Dissertation Writing Support as well as external fellowships and support as determined on a case by case basis.

Graduate Researcher - fulfills the duties of a Research Assistant and is supported consistent with the stipend requirements of these guidelines but has received assistantship/fellowship support for the maximum time allowable and, is therefore, no longer eligible for assistantship/fellowship benefits.

Studio Assistants: matriculated graduate students in the Master of Fine Arts program who perform support functions relevant to the student's field of study at a professional level.

Clinical Assistants: matriculated students in the graduate level Nursing programs who present training applications and oversee practice of those applications in a laboratory setting prior to the students undertaking hands-on experience in the clinical settings.

Graduate Assistants: matriculated graduate students who serve as graders, prepare labs, develop assignments or exams, proctor exams, or perform other supporting roles for instructors of record. Graduate Assistants may also perform administrative or support functions relevant to the student's field of study at a professional level. Job descriptions are required for Graduate Assistants and the final determination of appropriateness of both duties and level is at the discretion of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies.

TYPES AND LEVEL OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Distinguished Doctoral Fellowships: very limited number of multi-year fellowships for truly distinguished graduate students supported by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. There are rare instances when such an appointment may be supported through other funding sources. Distinguished Doctoral Fellows receive \$24,000 per calendar year as stipend plus full tuition and college fee credit for up to four years subject to maintaining full-time enrollment, a minimum GPA of 3.5, and satisfactory progress in dissertation research. Written nominations are accepted from the appropriate Graduate Program Director or faculty advisor with the endorsement of the Graduate Program Director. The nomination deadline is February 15th for the following academic year.

Doctoral Fellowships: limited number of one-year fellowships for excellent graduate students supported by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. It is expected that the support for all other years of the student's eligibility for financial support be provided by her/his advisor or program/department. There are rare instances when such an appointment may be supported through other funding sources. Doctoral Fellows receive \$18,000 per academic year as stipend plus full tuition and college fee credit for one year of a doctoral program subject to maintaining full-time enrollment, a minimum GPA of 3.5, and satisfactory progress in dissertation research. Written nominations are accepted from the appropriate Graduate Program Director or faculty advisor with the endorsement of the Graduate Program Director. Nominations are accepted on an on-going basis.

Doctoral Support: limited number of full or partial tuition credit awards without a stipend for full-time doctoral students for one year at any point during the program of study. Written nominations are accepted from the appropriate Graduate Program Director or faculty advisor with the endorsement of the Graduate Program Director on an on-going basis.

Doctoral Bridge Fellowships: supported by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies for a maximum duration of one year during external funding gaps. The level of stipend depends on the funding level before the external grant expired and the student's stage of completion of requirements in the doctoral program. Tuition credit may be provided as part of Bridge Fellowships.

Dissertation Writing Support: provided by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. Dissertation Writing Support is intended to help students in the final semester of their doctoral program focus on writing their dissertation and complete their degree. Because of resource limitations, the support is provided to a limited number of students on a competitive basis. Academic standing as well as history of University financial support to the student are some of the factors used to evaluate nominations. The guidelines and criteria as well as nomination process and deadlines for Dissertation Writing Support may be found at:

<http://www.umassd.edu/media/umassdartmouth/graduatestudiesadmissions/dissertationwritingsupportguideline-2016.pdf> .

Research Assistants: supported by externally or internally funded grants awarded to UMass Dartmouth faculty and staff. Doctoral level Research Assistants receive a minimum stipend of \$16,500 for an academic year, inclusive of intersession and spring break, for 20 hours per week appointment (\$12,000 minimum for master's level). Summer support, if provided, requires additional stipend, the level of which is dependent upon the number of hours per week the student is expected to commit. Full-time Research Assistantships carry full tuition credit (a portion of which is provided by the University and the remaining portion provided by the funding source or other funds available to the PI, department or college – see Tuition Credit section for details).

Graduate Researcher: supported by externally or internally funded grants awarded to UMass Dartmouth faculty and staff. The stipend levels are consistent with Research Assistant appointments.

Teaching Fellowships: These appointments, in most instances, are supported by the department offering the course. Doctoral level Teaching Fellows receive \$16,000 (\$12,000 minimum for master's level with the exception of programs in the College of Visual and Performing Arts which have a minimum of \$8,000) per academic year as stipend plus full tuition credit for 20 hours per week appointment.

Teaching Assistantships: These appointments, in most instances, are supported by the department offering the course. Doctoral level Teaching Assistants receive \$14,000 (\$12,000 minimum for master's level) per academic year as stipend plus full tuition credit for 20 hours per week appointment.

Instructional Assistants: These appointments, in most instances, are supported by the department offering the course. The stipend levels are consistent with the corresponding Teaching Fellow or Teaching Assistant appointments.

Distinguished Art Fellowships: very limited number of multi-year fellowships for truly distinguished artists in the Master of Fine Arts program supported by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. Distinguished Art Fellows receive \$16,500 per calendar year as stipend plus full tuition and college fee credit for up to three years subject to maintaining full-time enrollment, a minimum GPA of 3.5, and satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements. Written nominations are accepted in consultation with the Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts. The nomination deadline is March 1st, unless determined to be earlier at the discretion of the Dean of the College, for the following academic year.

Studio Assistantships: supported by the College of Visual and Performing Arts. Studio Assistants receive a minimum of \$8,000 per academic year as stipend plus partial tuition credit for 20 hours per week appointment provided the corresponding hourly rate is not less than minimum wage.

Clinical Assistantships: stipend support provided by the College of Nursing. Clinical Assistants receive \$12,000 per academic year as stipend plus full tuition credit for 20 hours per week appointment.

Graduate Assistantships: stipend support provided by the hiring department or unit. Graduate Assistants in the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering, the College of Nursing as well as the School for Marine Science and Technology receive partial tuition credit and a minimum of \$9,000 per academic year as stipend for 20 hours per week appointment provided the corresponding hourly rate is not less than minimum wage. Graduate Assistants in the Charlton College of Business and the College of Visual and Performing Arts receive partial tuition credit and a minimum of \$8,000 per academic year as stipend for a 20 hours per week appointment provided the corresponding hourly rate is not less than minimum wage.

External Fellowships: supported by external funding agencies and corporations such as Fulbright Fellowships, National Science Foundation Fellowships, Tufts Nursing Educator Fellowships, Raytheon Fellowships. Benefits and terms for these appointments vary. Final determination of eligibility for tuition credit and the percentage of the credit will be made by the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies.

TUITION CREDIT

The percentages below are for full-time (20 hours per week) appointments. Half time appointments carry proportionally lower tuition credit. Appointments for 10 to 19 hours per week are considered half-time for tuition credit purposes. These credit percentages apply to the tuition charge only; students are responsible for all other charges.

Teaching Assistants & Clinical Assistants

Students with teaching assistantships and clinical assistantships, irrespective of their residency, will receive 100% tuition credit.

Research Assistants

Students with in-state residency will receive 100% tuition credit. Eighteen percent (18%) of the tuition credit will be borne by the University and 82% will be funded by external grants or other funding sources available to the PI, department, or college.

Students with proximity or regional residency will receive 100% tuition credit. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the tuition credit will be borne by the University and 65% will be funded by external grants or other funding sources available to the PI, department, or college.

Students with out-of-state residency will receive 100% tuition credit. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the tuition credit will be borne by the University and 46% will be funded by external grants or other funding sources available to the PI, department, or college.

Graduate Assistants

Students with in-state residency will receive tuition credit equal to 18% of the total tuition charge; the remaining portion will be the responsibility of the student.

Students with proximity or regional residency will receive tuition credit equal to 20% of the total tuition charge; the remaining portion will be the responsibility of the student.

Students with out-of-state residency will receive tuition credit equal to 32% of the total tuition; the remaining portion will be the responsibility of the student.

Studio Assistants

Students with in-state residency will receive tuition credit equal to 58% of the total tuition charge; the remaining portion will be the responsibility of the student.

Students with proximity or regional residency will receive tuition credit equal to 60% of the total tuition charge; the remaining portion will be the responsibility of the student.

Students with out-of-state residency will receive tuition credit equal to 66% of the total tuition; the remaining portion will be the responsibility of the student.

OTHER GUIDELINES

- In general, no assistantship/fellowship financial support from university sources is provided to part-time students unless their services in either teaching or research represent a critical need for the University/program, or students no longer need a full-time load of course work during their last semester/year.
- Failure to maintain full-time enrollment at any point during the duration of an assistantship/fellowship appointment, without a waiver of the requirement, may result in the reversal of any tuition benefits that have been credited and the student will become responsible for payment of the charges.
- In order to receive and maintain tuition credit benefits, students must work in the assistantship position for a minimum of twelve weeks per semester. The Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies will send a message each semester indicating the date by which students must begin working as well as when recommendation forms are due. Benefits awarded to students who do not meet the twelve week requirement may be rescinded.
- Students enrolled in certificate programs or non-degree status are not eligible for any assistantship/fellowship financial support from university funding sources.
- Students who have GPA below 3.0 are not eligible for assistantships or fellowships.
- The maximum length of time for assistantship/fellowship financial support from university sources through all categories except Research Assistants is two years for a master's degree program (three years for a three-year professional terminal master's program) or four years for a doctoral degree program. Research Assistantship support is limited to a maximum of three years for master's students and six years for doctoral students who enter the program with a bachelor's degree and five years for those who enter the program with a master's degree. All awards throughout the student's program of study at a given level are included in the calculation of maximum time for assistantship/fellowship financial support.
- The University only establishes the minimum levels of assistantship/fellowship stipends. PIs, departments, and colleges can enhance the support packages.
- A mixed package of TA, RA and GA support with full or partial tuition credit is allowed.
- Students in the 3+2 or 4+1 combined undergraduate and graduate programs are not eligible for assistantships/fellowships or tuition credit until they have completed all the requirements for their undergraduate degree and have been matriculated to the graduate level of study.

- For courses taken through University Extension for Online and Continuing Education - students who have Teaching, Research, or Clinical Assistantships that provide full tuition credit will be accorded full tuition credit. In addition, students enrolled in on-line courses with a full tuition credit benefit will receive a credit for the on-line technology fee. Students who have a Teaching, Research, Clinical or Studio Assistantship that provides partial tuition credit will be accorded partial tuition credit of the same percentage. There is no on-line technology fee benefit for students with partial tuition credit benefits and there is no tuition credit benefit for students who are awarded Graduate Assistantships. Students are responsible for paying all other charges associated with enrollment in courses through University Extension for Online and Continuing Education.
- The start date and end date cited in assistantship/fellowship contracts is all inclusive with the exception of Teaching Assistants. The start and end dates for Teaching Assistant appointments are set by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies; there is no work commitment during intersession for those students who have teaching/fellowship assistantship contracts.
- By federal regulation, all individuals receiving compensation must demonstrate eligibility to work in the United States via the I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification form.