



DATE: April 24, 2020
TO: Deans, Department Chairs, and Graduate Directors
THROUGH: Mary Ann Rankin, Senior Vice President and Provost
FROM: Steve Fetter, Associate Provost and Dean
SUBJECT: Stipend Levels for Graduate Assistants and Fellows for FY 2021

For FY2021, the minimum stipend level for graduate assistantships will increase by 1% due to the COLA that was applied to all stipend levels on January 1, 2020. Our intention is to increase minimum stipends in future fiscal years, subject to availability of funding, to maintain the minimum Step-I 9-month stipend above the cost of attendance estimated by the Office of Student Financial Aid for mandatory fees, room and board, personal expenses, and books and supplies. The minimum stipend has increased 17.6% since July 2018.

The new minimum stipends for Step-I Graduate Assistants, whether on state or research accounts, are given below with additional guidelines. Please ensure stipends and stipend levels are in compliance.

Graduate Assistantship Stipends

- A. Graduate assistants fall into one of three steps. Step-I is for first-year graduate assistants without a master's degree; Step-II is for continuing graduate assistants and first-year assistants holding a master's degree; and Step-III is for doctoral students officially advanced to candidacy. Students should be placed in the appropriate step.
B. The Graduate School sets a minimum stipend level for Step-I. Each unit is to ensure that its Step-I stipend level is equal to or higher than the minimum specified below for 9-, 9.5-, and 12-month assistantships.
C. Teaching Assistants must be offered 9.5- or 12-month assistantships due to responsibilities after the last day of classes. Teaching Assistants may not be offered 9-month assistantships.
D. Stipend levels have no caps at any step, and must increase between steps.
E. All graduate assistants at a particular step in a particular unit should receive the same stipend amount regardless of their payment history.

Minimum Stipends for Step I Graduate Assistantships are as follows:

Table with 3 main columns: 9-month Assistantship, 9.5-month Assistantship, and 12-month Assistantship. Each column has sub-columns for Full and Half stipend amounts for Step I.

Graduate Fellowship Stipends: 9 and 12-Month

- A. The Graduate School sets minimum stipend levels, specified below, for fellowships to qualify for tuition remission. For details, see: <https://www.gradschool.umd.edu/funding/fellowship-information/tuition-award-guidelines>.
- B. Fellowship stipend levels have no caps. The Graduate School strongly encourages programs to offer fellowship packages that substantially increase the likelihood of successful student recruitment and degree completion.
- C. Guidelines for University and Dean’s Fellowship increments apply.
- D. No work requirements can be attached to graduate fellowships.

FY2021 Minimum Stipends for Graduate Fellowships are as follows:

9-month Fellowships	
Full	Half
\$17,500	\$8,750

12-month Fellowships	
Full	Half
\$22,500	\$ 11,250

International Students on Assistantships or Fellowships

International students offered 9- or 9.5-month assistantships or fellowships must show proof of private financial resources for the remainder of the year or must be provided additional support for that period. In either case, the total 12-month amount must equal or exceed the amount required by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to obtain an immigration visa. For further information, contact International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) at ext. 4-7740.

For further information regarding stipend guidelines, or other assistance, contact Patricia Woodwell, Director – Finance & Administration (x50814 / paw@umd.edu) or Barbara McElroy-Ferguson, Manager – Fellowships & Tuition Remission (x50371 / baf@umd.edu).