



DATE: April 18, 2025

TO: Deans, Department Chairs, and Graduate Directors

THROUGH: Jennifer King Rice, Senior Vice President and Provost *Jennifer King Rice*

FROM: Stephen Roth, Associate Provost and Dean *Stephen M Roth*

SUBJECT: **Minimum Stipend Levels for Graduate Assistants and Fellows for FY 2026**

Graduate Assistantship Stipends

Effective July 1, 2025, a 1% COLA will be added to all graduate assistant (GA) minimum stipends. Funding will be provided to units for the COLA for GAs currently on State-supported accounts to increase the current paid assistantship stipend to the new minimum. Stipends already over the minimum at each step will not receive additional funding. These increases continue our commitment to enhance our support of GAs. Accounting for the GA tuition assistance benefit, the minimum Step I 9-month stipend is above the cost of attendance estimated by the Office of Student Financial Aid for AY25-26. The Graduate School encourages programs to offer stipends that substantially increase the likelihood of successful student recruitment and degree completion.

The new minimum stipends are given below. Please ensure that stipends in your unit comply with the following guidelines:

- A. GAs should be placed in the appropriate step: step I for master's students; step II for doctoral students not advanced to candidacy; step III for doctoral students advanced to candidacy.
- B. The Graduate School sets minimum stipend levels for each step and appointment term (9, 9.5, and 12 months). Stipend levels have no caps at any step or term.
- C. Teaching assistants must be offered 9.5- or 12-month assistantships, due to responsibilities before and after the last day of classes. Teaching assistants may not be offered 9-month assistantships.
- D. All graduate assistants at a particular step and term appointed by a unit should receive the same stipend amount, regardless of their payment history, duties, or the graduate program (when different from the appointment unit).

FY2026 Minimum Graduate Assistant Stipends

	9 months		9.5 months		12 months	
	Full	Half	Full	Half	Full	Half
Step I	\$26,568	\$13,284	\$28,046	\$14,023	\$35,426	\$17,713
Step II	\$27,088	\$13,544	\$28,594	\$14,297	\$36,118	\$18,059
Step III	\$27,608	\$13,804	\$29,144	\$14,572	\$36,810	\$18,405

Graduate Fellowship Stipends

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

FY2026 Minimum Graduate Fellowship Stipends

9-month fellowships		12-month fellowships	
Full	Half	Full	Half
\$25,000	\$12,500	\$30,000	\$15,000

NOTE: For FY26-27, minimum graduate fellowship stipends will increase to \$27,500 for 9-month and \$35,000 for 12-month fellowships to keep reasonable parity with GA stipend minimums.

International Student 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 questions or further information regarding assistantship or fellowship stipend guidelines, contact Patricia Woodwell - Director, Finance & Administration (x50814 / paw@umd.edu) or Maria Palmaira - Business Manager, Fellowships (x50404 / palmaira@umd.edu).