



DATE: April 19, 2019
TO: Deans, Department Chairs, and Graduate Directors
THROUGH: Mary Ann Rankin, Senior Vice President and Provost *Mary Ann Rankin*
FROM: Steve Fetter, Associate Provost and Dean *Steve Fetter*
SUBJECT: **Stipend Levels for Graduate Assistants and Fellows for FY 2020**

For FY 2020, the minimum stipend level for graduate assistantships will increase as follows:

- Effective July 1, 2019, a 3% COLA will be applied to *all* stipend levels.
- Effective July 1, 2019, an *additional* 4% increase will apply to the minimum Step-I stipend level.

Adjustments may be necessary to Step-II and Step-III stipends once the Step-I minimum stipend level increase of 4% is applied to ensure that the stipend levels increase with steps. Such adjustments should be made *after* the 3% COLA is applied, as all steps must receive at least the 3% COLA.

With implementation of the 3% COLA and the 4% minimum stipend increase, the minimum Step-I stipend levels will be 7.12% above the FY19 levels and 16.4% above the FY18 levels.

Note that the FY20 minimum Step-I 9.5-month stipend is above the cost of attendance (COA) estimated by the Office of Student Financial Aid for mandatory fees, room and board, personal expenses, and books and supplies. Our intention is to continue to increase minimum stipends in future fiscal years, subject to availability of funding, to maintain the minimum Step-I stipend above the COA.

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. All 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:

9-month Assistantship			9.5-month Assistantship			12-month Assistantship		
	Full	Half		Full	Half		Full	Half
Step I	\$ 17,802	\$ 8,901	Step I	\$ 18,791	\$ 9,395.50	Step I	\$ 23,736	\$ 11,868

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.

FY2020 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) or Barbara McElroy-Ferguson, Manager – Fellowships & Tuition Remission (x50371).