



# **DIRECTORS OF GRADUATE STUDIES HANDBOOK**

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# INTRODUCTION

Dear Director of Graduate Studies (DoGS):

Congratulations on your appointment and welcome to the DoGS community. The DoGS community consists of faculty members from every graduate and professional program across campus who are dedicated to the success of their graduate and professional students. The DoGS faculty members also create a broad support network for each other, which provides the key ingredient for the success of every graduate program across campus. We actively strive to support the University's goals of "student success" and "develop and transmit new knowledge" through our campus-wide network of faculty.

The DoGS serves as an emissary of The Graduate School Dean to each department. At the same time, the DoGS provides the "ears and eyes" to the Graduate Dean – helping the Dean to understand issues and challenges that are occurring in individual programs or as a result of University policies. The DoGS serves to ensure the success of the graduate students from recruitment through graduation. The DoGS is also an advocate for the support of graduate students in their department and actively works with the Dean and staff of The Graduate School to improve the success of students in their graduate and/or professional degree program.

It is usually a good idea to maintain the same DOGS for multiple years (3-year terms are typical) so that there is some continuity and expertise built up in the department.

David Kieda, Dean

The Graduate School

# DOGS RESPONSIBILITIES

Directors of Graduate Studies duties fall into two general categories: official (as mandated by the Graduate Handbook) and unofficial. These two aspects of the DoGS position are explored below.

## OFFICIAL DUTIES

### **Approval of Program of Study**

At least one semester prior to graduation, a complete program of study should be entered into the Graduate Records Tracking System by the department graduate coordinator and then approved by the student's supervisory committee and the director of graduate studies. Once the student is admitted to candidacy for the graduate degree, this program of study is reviewed by The Graduate School.

### **Approval of Ph.D. Time Limit Extensions**

The time limit for completing a Ph.D. degree is determined by individual departmental policy approved by the Graduate Council. Requests to exceed established time limits must be recommended by a candidate's supervisory committee and approved by the departmental director of graduate studies and the dean of the Graduate School.

### **Administrative Duties Shared with the Student Supervisory Committee**

In cases where departments recommend a Master of Philosophy degree for students not completing a dissertation, a letter is required confirming that the student understands that the M.Phil. is a terminal degree, and that the student will not be allowed to rescind the degree. This letter must be signed by the student and Chair of the student's supervisory committee or the Director of Graduate Studies

### **Administrative Duties Shared by Department Chair**

The Graduate Handbook states several responsibilities that a program's DoGS can assume if delegated by the Department Chair. These include

- appointing and/or approving chair and committee members of student supervisory committees
- determining credit/no credit status and exceptions for students
- granting exceptions to general departmental requirements for degrees

## UNOFFICIAL DUTIES

In practice, the DoGS does many things outside of his or her official responsibilities to ensure the success of the graduate and professional students. These may vary from department to department, but in general the DoGS performs most of the tasks bulleted below.

- Maintaining/overseeing the departmental/degree program Graduate Handbook and relevant websites
- Overseeing students pursuing the degree program, meeting informally with students as needed and helping to resolve student issues
- Notifying students and faculty of fellowship, scholarship, and travel support opportunities; updates to University policies regarding to graduate student support; and events and workshops of interest
- Attending DoGS meetings and disseminating information about graduate student support services across campus
- Running an annual graduate student town meeting (at minimum)
- Assisting with new student recruitment efforts, admissions, and orientation
- Attending public thesis defense and proposal meetings and encourage thesis and dissertation success
- Helping spearhead self-assessment for graduate programs during departmental 7-year Graduate Council Review

These duties are explored in greater depth below.

### **Departmental/Degree Program Graduate Handbook and Websites**

#### *Graduate Handbook*

Each department is required to have a departmental or degree program Graduate Handbook. The Graduate Handbook should contain everything a student needs to navigate through graduate school successfully. Graduate Handbooks can be a series of webpages, a pdf, or a physical manuscript, but the department should provide electronic versions that can be accessed by students, faculty, and The Graduate School office.

Graduate Handbooks will inevitably reflect the unique requirements and personality of the department or degree program. However, some standard policies and information items should be included in each handbook. These policies and information items include, but are not limited, to

- typical course sequences
- exam requirements, including expectations for format, duration, etc. for the qualifying exams and other preliminary exams
- minimum course loads
- procedures for requesting financial support from the department
- expectations for TA, RA, and GA work assignments
- resources for graduate students who are just beginning their research
- departmental policies on number of years maximum for a degree
- formal guidelines for dispute resolution
- formal policies on graduate student family leave
- formal policy on orderly dismissal of graduate students

DoGS are expected to oversee maintenance of the Graduate Handbook, updating it as necessary so that the Handbook reflects current University, Graduate School, and departmental policies and expectations.

DoGS are encouraged to check their internal Handbook policies against University and Graduate School standards. Handbook policies related to graduate student employment, the payment of scholarships and benefits, and dismissal from degree programs should be vetted through General Counsel. Other policies that may need be vetted are determined by University or Departmental administration. See this [site](#) for resources related to Graduate Program Handbooks.

### *Graduate Program Websites*

Graduate student websites can be a simple electronic version of your Graduate Handbook or can include additional information/pages to help enhance student experience and access to resources. Possible information on graduate student websites might include

- timeline graphic for graduate program milestones
- collections of research aids common to your discipline
- contact information for department and University staff overseeing graduate student progress and procedures
- networking/connection tools for graduate students interested in contacting members of their cohort

- tips and tricks from faculty/students for a successful graduate school experience
- a repository of resource links or documents
- lists of recent student achievements, including defenses and degree conferrals, publications, conferences, etc.

DoGS are welcome to experiment with their electronic communication with their students and capitalize on what works best for their departments and students. DoGS are further encouraged to share their successful strategies with The Graduate School and other DoGS.

## Overseeing Students

The DoGS position is designed to be a valuable resource for students at each level of their graduate school experience. DoGS should keep a close eye on all graduate students in the degree program(s) they oversee. DoGS should reach out to students who appear to be having difficulty in their program and attempt to help the student resolve potential issues. Student issues may include

- not being able to find an appropriate advisor
- delay in time to graduation or other important degree milestones, such as qualifying exams
- conflicts between student and faculty and/or other students

DoGS should also make themselves generally available to students as a resource for navigating the department, the academic field, and their post-graduation plans. As a member of both administration and the department, the DoGS can provide invaluable insight to students as to the rigors of study, department politics and policies, and future opportunities involved in a student's field of study. On occasion, the DoGS can also provide mentorship and encouragement to students experiencing doubt or despair over graduation progress, job prospects, or life situations. DoGS should also recognize when it is appropriate to refer students to qualified health professionals if the student needs more comprehensive support beyond standard mentoring and encouragement.

### *Resolving Conflict*

DoGS will sometimes be involved in resolving conflict between the student and the department, the student and their supervisory chair or committee members, or the student and University or Graduate School policy. As an advocate for graduate students and a member of the department, DoGS should be aware of the delicate boundaries between their roles and work with Department Chairs, The Graduate School Office representatives, and the Dean of The Graduate School to help resolve student issues.



DoGS are encouraged to seek guidance regarding the appropriate handling of challenging situations. It is very appropriate for DoGS to reach out to the Dean and/or Associate Dean of The Graduate School for consultation and strategies in handling difficult cases. The DoGS may also seek help from more experienced DoGS in other departments, the Department Chair, or the Dean of their College, as long as these individuals do not share a conflict of interest in the situation. Depending upon the specific situations, other neutral parties which may be of benefit for confidential assistance include the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Equity and Diversity, the Office of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, the Associate Dean of Faculty, and the Dean of Students.

The DoGS should also be aware that there are both informal processes and formal processes for handling disputes. While the DoGS is allowed to use informal processes for dispute resolution, the DoGS should be aware that both faculty members and students have the right to seek a formal process for dispute resolution at any time. It is important that all parties understand their right to a formal dispute resolution process, if they choose to pursue it.

### *Legal Situations & Reporting Responsibilities*

Certain legal situations can arise when a student issue is related to accusations of assault or discrimination. DoGS are advised that in the case of sexual misconduct, university employees are required to fully report all particulars of the incidence to the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). DoGS should advise students early on that anything shared with the DoGS regarding sexual misconduct must be communicated to OEO. Students may wish to speak to a designated “confidential” representative. According to OEO’s [website](#),

*Under university policy, most University employees are legally required to report situations involving sexual misconduct and discrimination to the Office of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action. Some of these situations may be very personal; we respect your privacy and will protect it in accordance with University of Utah policy and FERPA. Although information about the situation may be reported to the OEO/AA, you have the right to choose to whom you speak, what you say, when you say it and what resources you use. If you prefer to speak first with a confidential resource (not required to report), you may contact the University Counseling Center (801 581-6826), the Women’s Resource Center (801 581-8030), or Center for Student Wellness, Sexual Assault Victim Advocacy Office (801 581-7779). Information provided to OEO/AA is considered ‘private’ information and will only be shared with other appropriate university personnel on a very strict ‘need-to-know’ basis.*

Students reporting sexual misconduct should be given this information immediately so that they can make informed choices regarding their privacy. Representatives of OEO are available at 801.581.8365 or <http://oeo.utah.edu> to provide support for DoGS who may be unclear of proper procedure.

In issues involving crimes covered under the [Clery Act](#), DoGS have a responsibility to report the crime to the U’s Department of Public Safety. Clery Act crimes include violent crimes, sexual misconduct, property crime such as burglary or arson, illegal weapon or drug possession (including alcohol), and hate crimes. See [“Staying Safe and Secure at the U”](#) for a more detailed



list of Clery Act Crimes. Crimes not occurring on University property or at University events do not need to be reported for the Clery Act but should still be referred to local authorities.

DoGS are not expected to resolve issues of criminality and should report or refer students to the appropriate authorities as quickly as possible. In cases where a student advocate is needed in legal matters, DoGS should refer the student to the Office of the Dean of Students.

In any situation in which a student exhibits or threatens violence or are themselves actively threatened, DoGS should contact Campus Police emergency services at 801.585.2677 (5-COPS) or local emergency authorities at 911.

### *International Students*

International graduate students have unique challenges in their studies beyond the challenges experienced by domestic graduate students. Issues such as visa maintenance, language barriers, and cultural difference can impact international students and affect student performance and time to graduation. DoGS are encouraged to be sensitive to the unique needs of international students and to examine their departmental practices, timelines, and policies to make sure they don't penalize international students.

International students and faculty and departmental staff who work with them should familiarize themselves with the [International Student and Scholar Services Office](#), which can help resolve visa issues and make sure that international students conform to University policy and federal law while studying at the U. International students should also be made aware that general student resources such as the [University Counseling Center](#) are available to help them.

International students tend to be affected more quickly and more strongly by changes in University and federal educational policies than their domestic counterparts. DoGS who notice common problems or frustrations developing among international students should notify The Graduate School and seek the assistance of Graduate School staff in addressing the situation.

### **Notifications to Graduate Students, Faculty, and Staff**

The DoGS is the primary liaison between University Administration and graduate students. The University and The Graduate School rely on DoGS and graduate advisors to keep graduate students informed about important policies, upcoming events and workshops, and available opportunities.

DoGS email addresses are included in the listserv [dogs@lists.utah.edu](mailto:dogs@lists.utah.edu). From this listserv, DoGS will receive materials approved by The Graduate School related to DoGS service, general graduate student offerings and support, upcoming events, and changes to University, Graduate School, and/or federal policy. DoGS are expected to make sure that these materials are sent to their students, faculty, and staff as appropriate, whether through the DoGS own action or by appointment to a department staff or faculty designee. Keeping the lines of communication open between the DoGS and The Graduate School is a basic DoGS responsibility. Changes to the listserv can be managed by emailing [info@gradschool.utah.edu](mailto:info@gradschool.utah.edu).

In addition to passing along information, DoGS are expected to be proactive about monitoring and relaying important information to the graduate students under their oversight. Some materials to keep a special eye on are listed below.

*Fellowships, Scholarships, and Travel Funding Awards*

DoGS should be aware of financial support available to their students and encourage students to apply. DoGS are also instrumental in promoting faculty enthusiasm for mentoring students as they apply. Alerting students and faculty to upcoming application deadlines, helping to identify students as likely candidates for certain awards, and providing students with access to resources are all ways to encourage funding success among your students.

There are many resources to help you keep track of funding opportunities for students. Below are some resources provided by The Graduate School

<b>Resource Name</b>	<b>Hyperlink</b>	<b>Description</b>
Graduate School Tuition & Benefits Home Page	<a href="https://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/">https://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/</a>	<i>Portal to University-sponsored graduate funding, external funding opportunities, policies, and announcements.</i>
Graduate Funding Resources	<a href="https://gradschool.utah.edu/funding-resources/">https://gradschool.utah.edu/funding-resources/</a>	<i>Web page with funding resources available to students.</i>
Graduate Funding Success Workshops	<a href="https://gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-funding-success-workshops/">https://gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-funding-success-workshops/</a>	<i>Upcoming and past workshops focused on providing resources, tips, and opportunities for students seeking funding.</i>
Job/Postdoc Offer List	<a href="https://gradschool.utah.edu/category/jobpostdoc-offers/">https://gradschool.utah.edu/category/jobpostdoc-offers/</a>	<i>List of current external opportunities for students looking for funding, career options, internships, and other opportunities</i>

*Updates to University and Graduate School Policies and Practices*

The University of Utah and The Graduate School maintain numerous practices and policies related to graduate student admission, course of study, funding, graduation, and many others. As the University grows and develops, these policies and practices are adjusted to optimally serve students and achieve the University's goals.

Policies relating to graduate students can be found listed in the [Graduate School Handbook](#). These high-level policies guide student and department behavior and success and are determined by University Administration or the Graduate Council. Exceptions to these policies are rare and must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Students. DoGS should familiarize themselves with these policies and make certain that their department and students are compliant with these policies.

Graduate School Office procedures relate to the everyday functioning of graduate student support carried out by the different divisions in The Graduate School. These procedures aim for maximum efficiency in providing support to the general graduate student body. A working knowledge of these processes can help DoGS correctly advise and support students.

DoGS are expected to communicate changes to procedures and policies as they are announced by The Graduate School. DoGS with concerns or questions about a policy or procedure should contact The Graduate School or raise the issue in a DoGS meeting. It is entirely possible that older University policies may provide conflicts with newer University policies and procedures. The Graduate School seeks the advice of the DoGS when such issues are identified in the Department or College. The Dean of the Graduate School will work with the DoGS to resolve the issue in support of student success and the University's mission.

## **Attending DoGS Meetings**

The DoGS have two meetings monthly on the last Thursday of the month during the Academic Year. The meetings have the same agenda, and DoGS are only expected to attend one of the meetings. The morning meeting runs from 7:30 - 9:00 am, while the afternoon meeting runs from 2:00 - 3:30 pm. Meetings are generally held in the Winder Boardroom (300 Park Building). (<http://bit.ly/2bmOGxJ>)

Attendance of DoGS meetings is a mandatory DoGS responsibility. DoGS meetings cover changes in policy related to graduate students, upcoming events of interest for graduate students, university resources, and many other important topics. It also allows DoGS the opportunity to provide feedback on the state of graduate studies at the U and discuss how to better meet the needs of students, faculty, and departments. Important information shared in the DoGS meeting will be posted on the DoGS portal on The Graduate School's website: <https://gradschool.utah.edu/directors-of-graduate-studies>.

The agenda for the meeting is generally sent to DoGS a week before the meeting takes place. To request an item to be added to the month's agenda, email [info@gradschool.utah.edu](mailto:info@gradschool.utah.edu) at least 10 days before the meeting date.

DoGS should be aware of ongoing limitations of parking near the Park Building. There is a A-level parking lot near the Park Building (<http://bit.ly/2ocRdfk>) that often has free spaces, and many University shuttles have service to the Park Building. (<http://www.uofubus.com>). If DoGS do not have a parking pass or are experiencing parking difficulty, the Dean has authorized use of a parking code for these meetings that will allow free parking at kiosk parking. This code must be requested from [info@gradschool.utah.edu](mailto:info@gradschool.utah.edu) at least four hours before the meeting. Parking cannot be reimbursed after the fact.

DoGS meeting information, including agendas and minutes from 2010 to the present, can be found online at <https://gradschool.utah.edu/directors-of-graduate-studies/dogs-meetings>. The DoGS are encouraged to use the minutes of the DoGS meetings as an ongoing resource. If the DoGS encounters missing items from a previous DoGS meeting, please notify Danny Nelson or the Dean, and the DoGS minutes will be corrected and updated.

## **Graduate Student Town Hall Meetings**

Graduate student town hall meetings are an excellent way to get first-hand accounting as to the experience of graduate students in the department. Town hall meetings allow students the opportunity to share concerns about department or University policies or practices, discuss issues relevant to their studies, and/or provide feedback about their security in the department, job prospects, and interaction with advisors and staff.

The DoGS should hold at least one Town Hall/open forum for their graduate program per year. The optimal time to hold the meeting is at the end of the Fall semester. DoGS should plan for Town meetings to last for about 30 minutes. The preferred structure of the town meeting is as follows:

- Late afternoon or early evening when there are no conflicting graduate classes. Many Departments do the town meeting after a weekly departmental colloquium, which is usually scheduled to avoid conflicts with class schedules and teaching assignments.
- Some departments will provide some informal snacks. This is not required, but it can help with attendance and student participation.
- The Director of Graduate Studies and department Chair should be present (or an appropriate designee of the department chair, if they are not available). It is also advisable to have your Graduate program administrator attend the meeting.
- All graduate students are invited, but it is especially important to require attendance by first-year graduate students.
- DoGS are encouraged to advertise Town meetings early and hold them consistently, to build student trust and participation.

Items to be discussed at the Town Hall include

- Notices of upcoming department events and changes to policy which affect all graduate students in the program. This may include fellowship opportunities, award opportunities, upcoming conference planning, changes in departmental administration or staffing assignments, or changes to departmental policies.
- Review of milestones for first-year students, second-year students, and beyond. For students in research-based graduate degree programs, it is advisable to encourage first-year students to initiate an early Spring semester search for a research group to work with for the following summer.

- Reminders to students about basic requirements to stay in good standing: 3.0 GPA, making departmental milestones (list them), establishing supervisory committees, qualifying exams and approving programs of study, etc. It is also appropriate to remind students who are anticipating writing their dissertation in the near future to visit the Graduate School website and read over the Graduate School publication 'A Handbook for Theses and Dissertations' which describes thesis writing, format and approval, and requirements of The Graduate School. It is also appropriate to remind students to attend dissertation writing workshops offered by The Graduate School, as well as one-on-one consultation with the Thesis editors regarding formatting requirements.
- Solicitation for the first-year students to share their experience of the first semester. Ask them what the Department can do better to support them seek out any feedback regarding TA assignments, program of study requirements, university requirements, clarifications of the degree requirements and degree curriculum.
- General discussion with students and questions about any topic. If questions touch on a topic that you are unfamiliar with, DoGS should thank the student and promise to research the question and get back to them (and do get back to them).
- Follow up with the Department Chair, Dean, or Dean of the Graduate School regarding any open items or issues that need to be addressed.

It is good practice to generate a short document with a summary of the town hall discussion, and with any slides that were presented, and post these to your departmental website and notify students of the availability of the transcript. It is advisable for the DoGS to provide a summary of the discussion to the department faculty at a future faculty meeting.

## **Recruitment, Admissions, and Orientation**

Depending on the makeup of the department, the DoGS may be actively involved with recruitment of new students. DoGS often respond to future student inquiries regarding degree and program offerings and assist with new student recruitment efforts done by the department. This may involve one-on-one meetings with students and tours of the department (or organizing faculty and staff to provide such tours). Some departments have separate graduate recruitment committees; in this case, the DoGS might serve on this committee.

DoGS may also be involved in the organization of graduate admissions, including selection of students, assignment of TA/GA offers, etc. Again, some departments have a separate committee to handle admissions where the DoGS serves as a member of the committee.

Additionally, DoGS may be responsible for running or organizing orientation sessions for incoming students. Regardless of their involvement in the organizing of an orientation session, the DoGS should be present for any department orientation to discuss their role in supporting the department's graduate students.

DoGS should make sure their department follows local and federal restrictions in their efforts to recruit graduate students. For example, Title IV of the Higher Education act prohibits

individuals (including faculty, students and staff) or third-party companies from receiving incentives or compensation for recruiting success (i.e. a `headhunter fee') based upon number of student applications or number of students admitted. You may find more about this restriction in the Federal Register at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-11-27/pdf/2015-30158.pdf>

In addition, the DoGS should familiarize themselves with the Council of Graduate School's April 15<sup>th</sup> Resolution, to which the University of Utah is signatory. It is important that the DOGS be familiar with these restrictions guiding graduate recruitment and notify the Graduate School Dean if they have concerns regarding departmental practices, or if they are informed of infractions of these restrictions by other institutions. (See "Relevant Policies" Section below for greater discussion of these policies.) The Graduate Dean serves as an important resource to assist your departments and colleges, and we encourage the DOGS to consult with the Dean on any questions that may arise regarding graduate student recruitment. The Graduate School Dean will assist the DOGS in ensuring that the University of Utah complies with all relevant laws and agreements, and the Dean will also work with administration at other Universities to ensure a level playing field for all graduate recruitment activities.

### **Public Thesis/Dissertation Defense/Proposal Meetings and Student Publishing**

DoGS are encouraged to attend the public thesis defense meetings and thesis proposal meetings for all graduate students in their oversight. The purpose of this attendance is to consistently assess student outcomes by sampling the final product of the graduate degree program. This occurs sometimes in smaller departments, where it is feasible. If it is difficult for a single DoGS to attend all thesis defenses in a large department, other strategies might be used.

# DOGS COMPENSATION

The Graduate School does not mandate additional support for a person who is the Director of Graduate Studies in a department. Instead, many departments will generally reduce the level of other committee assignments for the DOGS.

DoGS compensation tends to be expressed in several ways by the department, including (but not limited) to

- reduced requirement to serve on committees
- reduced teaching responsibilities
- monetary compensation for DoGS service
- DoGS responsibility is spread out to more than one DoGS for minimal impact on individual DoGS
- no compensation

The Graduate School ran an informal survey of DoGS compensation strategies across campus in 2016. Results from this survey indicate that reduced teaching commitment, monetary compensation, and no compensation were the most common strategies used by departments surveyed. DoGS are welcome to reach out to The Graduate School to prepare for discussions with their departments about adequate compensation for their time and service.



## RELEVANT POLICIES

These University and Graduate School policies are highly relevant to graduate student oversight. DoGS are expected to understand and adhere to these policies. This is not an exhaustive list of policies but should provide some exposure to important policies guiding graduate programs. DoGS can contact the Graduate Records Office at 801.585.9873 or the Graduate School Dean with questions or concerns about policies.

### APRIL 15 RESOLUTION & PAY BY COMMISSION POLICY

Two important University policies regulate a department's use of funds to supplement recruitment efforts, the April 15<sup>th</sup> policy and Pay by Commission Policy.

#### The April 15 Resolution

The April 15 Resolution states that

*Under prospective or enrolled graduate student completes an agreement that both student and graduate school expect to honor. In that context, the conditions affecting such offers and their acceptance must be defined carefully and understood by all parties.*

*Students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15; earlier deadlines for acceptance of such offers violate the intent of this Resolution. In those instances in which a student accepts an offer before April 15, and subsequently desires to withdraw that acceptance, the student may submit in writing a resignation of the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer. It is further agreed by the institutions and organizations subscribing to the above Resolution that a copy of this Resolution or a link to the URL should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistantship offer.*

*\*This Resolution applies to offers of financial support only, not offers of admission.*

*Reference Source is An Essential Guide to Graduate Admissions, published by the Council of Graduate Schools. Information may also be found at the Council of Graduate Schools website at <http://www.cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution>.*

DoGS should work with Department Chairs to make sure their departments are acting in accordance with this resolution. If prospective students report that other institutions are not acting in accordance with the April 15 Resolution (say, offering a time-sensitive monetary award for early enrollers), the DoGS or Department Chair should notify The Graduate School immediately.

## Pay by Commission Policy

Title IV of the Higher Education act prohibits individuals (including faculty, students and staff) or third-party companies from receiving incentives or compensation for recruiting success (i.e. a 'headhunter fee') based upon number of student applications or number of students admitted. You may find more about this restriction in the Federal Register at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-11-27/pdf/2015-30158.pdf>.

## FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

DoGS should help their departments remain compliant to all FERPA requirements. FERPA is an important act protecting student privacy and institutional liability.

In brief, the Act forbids the University from releasing personal identifiable student educational records or files, or personal information contained in those files, without the student's written consent, except in specified situations. The act extends to students and former students of the University the "right to inspect and review" their educational records.

For more information on FERPA and its requirements visit <https://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/ferpa.php>.

## TITLE IX

Title IX policies protect faculty, staff, postdocs, and students from misconduct including harassment, violence, stalking, and sex-based discrimination. DoGS should be aware that certain "Mandatory Report" conditions exist regarding sex-based misconduct. DoGS are advised that in the case of sexual misconduct, university employees are required to fully report all particulars of the incidence to the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). DoGS should advise students early on that anything shared with the DoGS regarding sexual misconduct must be communicated to OEO. Students may wish to speak to a designated "confidential" representative. According to OEO's [website](#),

*Under university policy, most University employees are legally required to report situations involving sexual misconduct and discrimination to the Office of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action. Some of these situations may be very personal; we respect your privacy and will protect it in accordance with University of Utah policy and FERPA. Although information about the situation may be reported to the OEO/AA, you have the right to choose to whom you speak, what you say, when you say it and what resources you use. If you prefer to speak first with a confidential resource (not required to report), you may contact the University Counseling Center (801 581-6826), the Women's Resource Center (801 581-8030), or Center for Student Wellness, Sexual Assault Victim Advocacy Office (801 581-7779). Information provided to OEO/AA is considered 'private' information and will only be shared with other appropriate university personnel on a very strict 'need-to-know' basis.*

Students reporting sexual misconduct should be given this information immediately so that they can make informed choices regarding their privacy. Representatives of OEO are available

at 801.581.8365 or <http://oeo.utah.edu> to provide support for DoGS who may be unclear of proper procedure.

## TUITION BENEFIT POLICIES & RESTRICTIONS

### Categories of Supported Graduate Students

The four eligible classifications qualifying a student for TBP participation are:

- Graduate Teaching Assistant (TA), (job code 9416, Exempt): A graduate student with instructional responsibilities as instructor of record, assistant to the instructor of record or tutor. Duties may include lecturing, holding discussion or problem sessions, conducting laboratory sections, conducting studio or performance work, online instruction, grading, tutoring, and holding office hours. International students must be cleared through the International Teaching Assistant Program before being placed in jobs coded 9416.
- Graduate Research Assistant (RA), (job code 9314, Exempt): A graduate student assigned directly to an externally funded research grant (5000 fund only) and doing research for that project.
- Graduate Assistant (GA), (job code 9330, Exempt): A graduate student assigned work related to his/her degree program and not covered in the previous two categories. A GA must be funded by his/her department and not supported by external 5000 funding. If a student wishes to work as a GA outside his/her home department, prior approval must be granted by the Dean of The Graduate School.
- Graduate Fellow (GF): A graduate student on a fellowship, whose tuition is not paid by the award. TBP has right of first reversal if other sources of tuition funding are available, meaning if tuition money is included in the fellowship award, the student should not use tuition benefit. Fellowship payments may be distributed as a scholarship through the University's Scholarship Administration System, or in special cases as a monthly traineeship disbursement. Fellowship payments made through the Scholarship Administration must be paid from item types set up as fellowships in order to count toward the student's TBP-eligible income (with budget category code 66900). No employer-employee relationship exists in a fellowship. The University administers the award and a service expectation may or may not accompany it.

These four specific job codes satisfy current federal policies and regulations for graduate students working toward post-baccalaureate degrees at the University of Utah. Graduate students should be classified as exempt whenever feasible and not hourly. Students on stipends should receive prorated monthly payments. Nonmatriculated students, part-time students, and students on probationary status are ineligible for the TBP.

PeopleSoft fund codes 1000, 2000, 5000 and 6000 satisfy TBP payroll eligibility. Note: Graduate RAs (9314) must be paid from research grants with a 5000 fund and eight-digit project number.

To be eligible for participation, no job code other than 9314 (RA) can be used on an e-PAF with a 5000 fund. Please note that RA's who participate in the subsidized health plan must have a benefit allotment attached to the 5000 fund that they are paid from that can cover the 80% of the premium for the health plan. If there is no benefit pool for student researchers on the grant that the student is paid from, please contact the Graduate School for further guidance.

## Registration Requirements

Students participating in the TBP must be:

- full-time, matriculated graduate students in good standing
- maintain cumulative GPA of 3.0 (Law School, 2.0). Students on academic probation are not eligible for a Graduate School tuition benefit.
- TBP full-time student status means registration for at least nine credit hours throughout the semester (Fall and Spring). This provision does not affect full-time definitions or requirements currently employed for the purpose of loan repayment, student insurance, or other reporting requirements.
- FTE cannot exceed .74. An FTE of .5 is the recommended maximum.

TBP covers:

- 9-12 graduate credit hours per semester during Fall and Spring, except for RAs whose tuition benefit is a minimum of nine and a maximum of 11 credit hours in Fall and Spring semesters and three credit hours in Summer semester.
- Non-resident tuition is covered in full, except for in cases of RAs who have exceeded 84 cumulative credit hours. At that point, the benefit will only cover resident tuition for RAs. This condition will be implemented in the semester when cumulative registration exceeds 84 credit hours as a University of Utah graduate student. Please ensure that students apply for state residency as soon as they are eligible. RA's who have finished their coursework may register for 9 thesis hours ONLY to avoid being charged nonresident tuition.
- Undergraduate, contract, and/or audited courses, repeated courses, and credit/noncredit courses count toward the required minimum nine credit hours but do not qualify for a tuition benefit. The benefit will not pay for those courses. A student registered for fewer than nine credit hours may make up the difference by registering for 6970, 6980, 7970, 7980, or other appropriate graduate credit. Students may register for a maximum 16 semester hours but are responsible for tuition for hours exceeding 12 credits.

**IMPORTANT:** Students adding and/or dropping courses after the semester's published add/drop deadlines are responsible for all charges incurred, including withdrawals. Tuition benefit will not pay for withdrawn credit hours, and if registration falls below nine credit hours

at any time during the semester, a student becomes ineligible for TBP participation and will be billed the full tuition for that semester.

## **Financial Support Requirements for a Tuition Benefit**

All students receiving a tuition benefit must meet minimum financial support requirements paid through the University of Utah for each semester in which a benefit is received.

No tuition benefit is granted to students receiving less than \$3,750 for the semester for the 2017-18 academic year. Required minimum support level is annually indexed to general salary increases to prevent gradual erosion of established graduate student salaries and stipends.

## **Service Requirements**

Graduate students receiving a tuition benefit are expected to fulfill the responsibilities appropriate to their specific assignments. No student is required to work more than 20 hours a week (0.50 FTE) in order to receive a tuition benefit. Faculty may expect up to 20 hours of work a week (0.50 FTE) from students receiving a 100% tuition benefit, 15 hours a week (0.375 FTE) from students receiving a 75% tuition benefit, and 10 hours a week (0.25 FTE) from students receiving a 50% tuition benefit. Students working one or more on-campus jobs with a combined FTE greater than a 0.74 FTE are ineligible to participate in the Graduate Tuition Benefit Program.

NOTE: In order to participate in the TBP, student information, including combined salaries, stipends, and FTEs (from university departments) using job codes (9330, 9314, and 9416), must be entered on the TBP Web page by the “home” department (department in which the student is pursuing a graduate degree). These data must be entered on the Web before the ‘state registration census’ is taken, e.g., 15th day of classes.

## **Residency and Meritorious Status**

As approved by the University of Utah president and according to Utah law and the Board of Regents’ policy, out-of-state TBP students are exempt from paying nonresident tuition. Their graduate tuition benefit is at the in-state rate for the appropriate TBP level (100%, 75%, or 50%). Tuition and fees not covered by the TBP are the student’s responsibility. Out-of-state, non-international graduate students receiving a tuition benefit must apply for Utah residency upon fulfilling 40 semester credit hours at a regionally accredited Utah institution of higher education. Comprehensive and aggressive action should be taken by departments to ensure that U.S. citizens apply for Utah residency once 40 graduate credit hours are reached. A student’s ability to establish residency will not affect receipt of a tuition benefit. (Go to <http://admissions.utah.edu/apply/residency/> for details on how to apply and qualify for residency reclassification).

Graduate meritorious status is established by:

- Admission to the University of Utah as a matriculated graduate student;
- Selection on the basis of merit, determined by written policy in each department, as a supported graduate student receiving a salary or stipend from the University of Utah under the provisions and subject to the minimum levels of support provided in the Graduate Council guidelines;
- Recommendation of the department chair;
- A candidate for a graduate degree maintenance of a 3.0 GPA or higher (except where otherwise approved, such as a 2.0 GPA in the Law School). GPAs are verified at the end of each academic year. A grade below C- is not accepted for credit toward a graduate degree; some departments further restrict C grades.

## Restrictions

1. A graduate tuition benefit is available only to graduate students compensated through the University of Utah. The TBP covers general graduate tuition and mandatory fees. Differential tuition charged by various university graduate and professional programs is the responsibility of the graduate student, department, and/or college. Students may participate in the TBP for a limited number of semesters, which need not be sequential. Time limits for participation in the TBP are as follows:
2. Students in a master's program are limited to two years (four semesters) of tuition benefit support.
3. Students in a doctoral program who entered with a bachelor's degree are limited to five years (10 semesters) of tuition benefit support.
4. Students in a doctoral program who also received a master's degree at the University of Utah are limited to five years of tuition benefit support (two years for a master's + three additional years for a doctorate).
5. Students entering a doctoral program with a master's degree from another university are eligible for four years (eight semesters) of tuition benefit support.

Doctoral students who fall under categories 2 and 3 above and who have served a minimum of four semesters as full-time TAs (0.50 FTE or 20 hrs./week) may receive an additional year (two semesters) of tuition benefit support beyond the limits described above. In order for the student to receive this time extension, departments must send a written request to The Graduate School that includes the student's name and uNID. These restrictions do not limit the number of years or semesters a program, department, or college may choose to support a student in addition to the TBP. Established time limits for completion of graduate programs still apply.

The student and department are responsible for maintaining an accurate count of the semesters of tuition benefit support a student has received. A student who receives more terms of tuition



benefit than he or she is eligible for may be retroactively billed for the tuition of the ineligible semester(s).

Tuition benefit support is only available for Research Assistants during summer semester. To qualify, a student must be paid as an RA during either Fall or Spring semester, then paid again as an RA during Summer term. All other requirements remain in place. Summer TBP covers only 3 credit hours and students must register for 3 credits to be eligible. Summer semester does not count against the total number of semesters that a student is eligible for.

### **Administration of the Tuition Benefit Program**

The Graduate School administers the Graduate Tuition Benefit Program. Verification of a student's TBP eligibility is the department's responsibility. Note: If a graduate student received a conditional tuition credit for the semester but (a) withdrew from courses, dropping below the minimum nine credit hours; (b) received less than the minimal financial support; or (c) in any way did not meet all requirements or restrictions associated with any of the TBP graduate student components or Graduate School policy, the tuition credit will be rescinded. The student will be billed for tuition and fees at the full, relevant rate for that semester. Department administrators should diagnose TBP problems using their Graduate Tuition Benefit Report and escalate issues to the Graduate School when necessary.

Students are not eligible to receive a tuition benefit after a semester has ended if they were not entered on the Web prior to the date the 'state's registration census' (15th day of classes) is taken. It is a department's responsibility to enter eligible students on the TBP Web page in a timely manner prior to the 15th day of the semester the student expects to receive the benefit. No retroactive benefits are awarded.

### **Petitions for Exception to Tuition Benefit Policy**

With a petition from the student's department chair to the dean of The Graduate School, exceptions will be considered for personal emergencies such as illness or family emergency. Petitions related to tuition benefit should be formatted as a letter printed on letterhead. While a student may submit a petition on their own behalf, typically the student's faculty advisor or Department Chair writes the petition. Petitions should be submitted to the Graduate School's Office of Fellowships & Benefits, where they are routed to the Dean for review.

The Tuition Benefits Program (TBP) has been designed to cover most of the cost of the graduate student tuition, but it was never intended to guarantee 100% tuition coverage for all students. In cases where a graduate student exhausts their TBP allotment before completing their degree, there are several options:

- The student may register for the minimum credit hours necessary to maintain continuous registration (1 credit hour) and pay directly. In some cases, visa and/or student loan or health insurance issues require the student to register for 3 credit hours of dissertation in order to maintain full-time student status. For example, the University's student health plan currently requires 3 credit hours enrollment.



- In many cases, the student is appointed as an RA and their stipend is paid for by a research grant. Under most circumstances, the PI of the grant can pay the tuition directly from their grant funds. In this case, the student does not have to register for the full 9 credit hours necessary for TBP. The grant can be charged the minimum necessary (1 or 3 credit hours of dissertation) in order to maintain continuous registration/full time student status, respectively.
- It is also allowable for the PI to pay the 1-3 credit hours of tuition directly out of their startup account fund, or out of a departmental funds.
- The PI may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for an exception to TBP policy. TBP exception petitions are appropriate for issues beyond the student's control, such as loss of a semester due to a personal illness or illness of a family member. The fact that the student has exhausted their allotment of TBP is not enough to merit a waiver of TBP policy.
  - To be eligible for a TBP exception, a student must be in good standing in their program, and this status must be documented in the student's Graduate Tracking. For example, an advanced student who has not formed a supervisory committee or has not passed the departmental milestones such as the qualifying exam is ineligible for a TBP exception. TBP petitions in these cases will be denied.
  - Before filing a petition with the Dean of the Graduate School, the PI should explore all options 1-3 above. The petition request should include a discussion regarding why the PI cannot charge the tuition to the same grant or account that is supporting the student stipend, or a different University account. The petition should demonstrate the feasibility of the student completing their degree within the request for TBP extension. Petitions lacking documentation regarding these issues will be returned to the petitioner unreviewed.
- The Dean of the Graduate School reserves the right to explore alternate paths to paying the student tuition in difficult cases with particular merit. This may include a collaborative solution involving cost sharing among the various stakeholders in the discussion. The emphasis behind this type of agreement is providing a mechanism to enable speedy degree completion. Multi-semester or ongoing TBP exceptions for the same student are generally appropriate only under unusual circumstances.