

# Graduate Fellowships



The Graduate Division manages over \$70 million in student funding annually for the campus, in the process serving over 10,000 students in more than 100 academic programs, from their earliest interest in coming to Berkeley to successful completion of their degrees.

## The right support package brings the best students to Berkeley

To attract the most competitive students to UC Berkeley and support them throughout their degree progress, the Graduate Division assists departments in offering multi-year recruitment fellowships and provides funding opportunities for students at various stages of their academic careers. Our knowledge and expertise in all areas of graduate funding and student life enable sound and thorough advice to students, faculty, and staff across our large and diverse campus.

## Helping students and faculty secure external fellowship funding

Students are offered grant-writing and application-preparation workshops by Graduate Division staff. Additional training is available to departmental staff to help them guide students applying for external awards. A compendium of external fellowship opportunities is continually updated and publicized in *eGrad*, our monthly online newsletter sent to all graduate students. The Graduate Division also coordinates student nominations and applications to external foundations and agencies that require central campus submission.

Faculty who seek external fellowship or traineeship funding for their graduate students are also offered assistance by the Graduate Division in the form of matching funds and data to enhance proposals' competitiveness. Since 2007, the Graduate Division has provided data and financial support to major interdisciplinary proposals that garnered over \$14 million in federal and private grants for graduate student support.

## Where does the money come from?

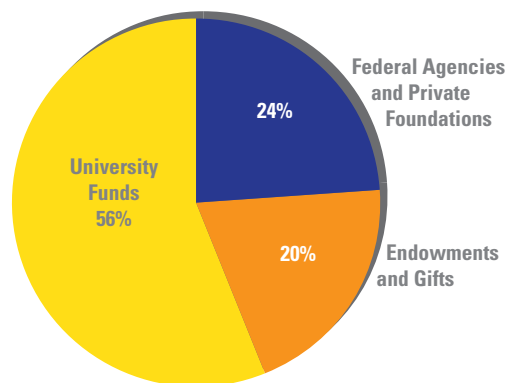
Funding for fellowships comes from:

**University funds.** The UC Office of the President allocates funds to each campus specifically for graduate student support. Much of it is generated from educational fees charged to students and is restricted to students who demonstrate need. Some monies are targeted for specific programs such as the Cota-Robles, Mentored Research, and UC Dissertation Fellowships. The Berkeley campus, via the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, provides funds for other fellowship programs.

### Federal agencies and private foundations.

Federal sources such as the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education provide a significant portion of the total funds for graduate fellowships. Whenever possible, as in the case of the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowships, the Graduate Division augments the funding in order to cover the campus-wide cost of education.

Berkeley graduate students are encouraged to apply for external fellowships and are extremely successful in winning national competitions. Current students, as well as Berkeley-bound



applicants, have made our campus the top choice for winners of the NSF Graduate Research Fellowships, the Ford Foundation Diversity Fellowships, and the Jacob K. Javits Fellowships.

**Endowments and gifts.** A growing number of gifts and endowments supplement University fund sources available for graduate student fellowships. Most of these funds are restricted by discipline or student demographic criteria, while some provide funding for graduate students at particular stages of graduate study or for disciplinary clusters and specific projects.

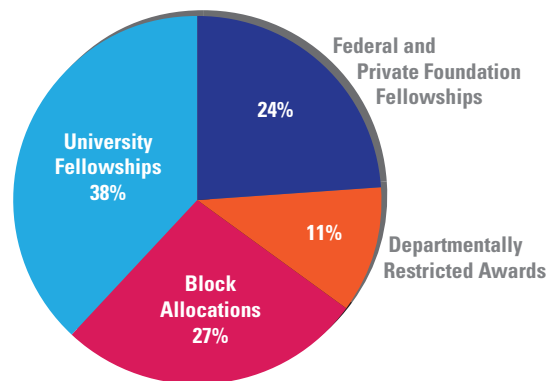
## Where does the money go?

The Graduate Division has designed several programs to maximize the use of fellowship funds while providing the fullest possible flexibility to graduate programs and students on campus, and ensuring compliance with federal regulations, University policies, and donor wishes. The Division tracks and provides regular reports on student progress to federal agencies, grant-giving foundations, donors, the UC Office of the President, the Financial Aid Office, and Berkeley's academic programs.

Our fellowship programs include:

### Block allocations to departments and degree-granting interdisciplinary graduate groups.

The Graduate Division allocates \$20 million annually to all of the campus's (non-self-supporting) graduate programs (based on each program's graduate student enrollment) to award



to graduate students at the program's discretion. Block allocations are the least restricted and most flexible forms of graduate student funding that academic programs receive from any campus source. While this funding originates from Graduate Division endowments and fee-generated, need-restricted funds from UC Office of the President, academic programs are free to make awards from block allocations to any of their graduate

students. The Graduate Division manages all the administrative aspects of utilizing sometimes highly restricted endowments and need-based funds to make sure students are paid.

**Departmentally restricted funds.** Graduate Division manages about \$8 million in endowment payout for departments across campus. These funds include all endowments that name a specific field of study in their terms and have no demographic restrictions subject to Proposition 209. Departments and programs decide how to allocate funds according to the terms of the endowment, while the Graduate Division handles all the accounting and assists with donor stewardship. Our award-winning, easy-to-use system called Gradlink-on-the-Web, or GLOW (<https://gradlink.berkeley.edu>), gives graduate programs direct access to all information about their departmentally restricted funds managed by the Graduate Division.

## The bottom line

In the full range of its student support activities, the Graduate Division strives to achieve multiple objectives, and to benefit everyone with whom we work. Through the fellowship competition for entering students, we **enable** all programs to offer highly competitive, multi-year funding packages to their best applicants. By awarding them centrally, we **maximize** the number of offers that can be made early in the admissions cycle. Through block allocations to graduate programs, we provide funding that can be awarded locally with maximum flexibility. Through management of external fellowships, we interface with federal and private funders and, whenever possible, **supplement** their contributions to provide larger awards to students and satisfy institutional match requirements.

Finally, we constantly try to **provide resources** that help our talented students, faculty and staff maximize external funding. For individual students, we provide information and advice on applying for external fellowships. For faculty, we provide meaningful financial support for their external proposals for fellowship and traineeship programs. For fundraisers and administrators, we provide matching funds to help them secure endowments that will fund their students in perpetuity.

**University fellowship programs.** The University-wide fellowship competition for entering graduate students, which includes the Berkeley Graduate Fellowships and the Chancellor's Fellowships, is key to attracting the top doctoral candidates to UC Berkeley. Additional fellowship programs include the Dean's Normative Time Fellowship, Chancellor's Dissertation Award, Mentored Research Award, UC Dissertation Award, Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship, and many others. While most of these programs are currently supported from University or federal funds, philanthropy has become more vital for graduate support than ever before. Privately sponsored programs include the Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) Fellowships, International House Gateway Fellowships, Rose Hills Foundation Fellowships, Dr. and Mrs. James C.Y. Soong Fellowships, and others. Many more are being established by endowments secured through the Campaign for Berkeley.

## The benefits of student-to-fund matching

By careful oversight of the broad array of funding sources, many of which carry restrictions on use, the Graduate Division can apply a student-to-fund matching process to award highly restricted gifts and endowments. After an award decision is made for an individual student, a source of funds is tapped in conformity with any restrictions on the use of the money. The pool of graduate students to whom the Graduate Division makes awards is large enough to match recipients even to a highly restricted or unusual fund, thus getting the most from the University's resources while satisfying the intent of donors. The student-to-fund match enables the disbursement of private funds in compliance with Proposition 209, which prohibits "preferential financial aid" based on a student's race, gender, color, ethnicity or national origin.

A similar process is used to distribute the need-restricted funding from the University Student Aid Program (USAP) disbursed by the UC Office of the President. Because graduate programs do not base their award decisions on students' need, Graduate Division reviews financial aid records for students receiving awards through block allocations and matches them to available need-based USAP funding.

**Note:** Financial aid records are available only if students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents complete the Free Application for Student Financial Aid (FAFSA) for the current year. This is why the Graduate Division regularly asks those who work with students to encourage them to submit this form every year.

## How does the multi-year fellowship competition for doctoral students work?

Each academic program is given a nomination allotment tied to an averaged number of newly enrolled doctoral students. Every Ph.D. program receives at least one opportunity to nominate for a Berkeley fellowship; departments with relatively higher enrollments receive additional nomination allotments.

**How are competition decisions made?** All fellowship competition decisions are made by a faculty committee. The multi-year fellowship competition is our largest, with over 400 nominees and 24 faculty reviewers appointed as a subcommittee of the Graduate Council under the authority of the Academic Senate. About 250 nominees receive funding offers from a pool of about 2,000 admitted students (total annual doctoral applicant population is currently close to 15,000).

When reviewing a nominee's information,

faculty readers consider the student's academic preparation, intellectual potential, and evidence of industry and motivation. For some fellowships, faculty look for strong academic achievement despite challenges such as educational, cultural or social obstacles; contribution to diversity within a discipline or in the graduate community at large; and evidence of an intention to serve educationally underrepresented segments of society.

All awarding is based strictly on faculty decisions, which are final and cannot be appealed to the Graduate Division.

**Why hold the competition centrally instead of allocating all funds to departments for distribution?** Graduate fellowships are offered centrally in accordance with an estimated "take rate," the percentage of admitted students who enroll. In the multi-year fellowship competition,

about 167 percent of available fellowships are offered, with the expectation (based on recent experience) that about 60 percent of those offers will be accepted. This encourages all programs to do their utmost to recruit candidates without the financial risk of offering more awards than they can fund.

Programs often ask whether a declined offer can devolve to their next best candidate. This is not possible, as the maximum number of offers is made as early as possible in the cycle.

The campus-wide competition is recognized as one of the main pillars of comprehensive excellence for UC Berkeley, as uniformly high standards are applied to the nominees of all programs. Thus, the most excellent students are offered the best support awards, maximizing Berkeley's chances of enrolling the nation's top students.