

Berkeley Graduate Division

7 January 2020

To: Department Chairs, Head Graduate Advisers, and Graduate Student Affairs Officers

From: Lisa García Bedolla, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division
Eric Falci, Associate Dean

Re: **Updates to Stipend Cap and Work Restriction for Graduate Division Fellowships**

This memo updates the Graduate Division's limits on (1) the amount of stipend funding that may be provided to students receiving Graduate Division fellowship and block allocation funds and (2) the employment that they may accept while on fellowship.

The rationale for our stipend and employment caps was outlined in a [memo](#) dated February 11, 2015; the changes being made this year are intended to reflect cost of living increases and to provide departments with greater flexibility in the design of funding packages.

Stipend Cap Increase

The cap on total stipend funding awarded to recipients of Graduate Division funds will increase to **\$38,000** beginning in 2020-2021. This cap covers the twelve-month year (Fall, Spring, and the following summer); it applies to Graduate Division funds, *including block grant awards*, as well as to Graduate Division funding in combination with external awards (such as federal multi-year fellowships and one-year research/dissertation writing fellowships).

The following types of awards are excluded from the cap:

- Departmentally-controlled gift and endowment funds (including Departmentally Restricted Awards), which may be used for additional supplementation in furtherance of departmental recruitment needs.
- Graduate Division awards that are intended to cover specific expenses (e.g., Conference Travel Grants, Parent Grants); to reward meritorious service (e.g., Outstanding GSI Awards); or to provide a one-time recruitment bonus (e.g., Power Top-Off Awards).

Note that some fellowships may have their own stipend limits or other supplementation rules.

Appointments while on Full Graduate Division Fellowships

Recipients of University multi-year fellowships and other full Graduate Division and Graduate Division-administered awards (such as the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship) are restricted to working no more than 25% time during the academic year semesters (not including summer) in which they receive fellowship funding. The Graduate Division imposes **no work restriction on recipients of block grant awards and other departmental awards paid using Graduate Division funds.**

Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate Division

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The 25% limit for full fellowships applies by academic year, to average employment across the academic year semesters in which a fellow receives funding. Hence, a fellow receiving fellowship funds in both Fall and Spring may hold a single one-semester 50% appointment, 25% appointments in both terms, or another combination averaging 25% time. A student receiving a fellowship in only one semester is limited to 25% employment during that semester, but is subject to no fellowship-related limitation during the other semester. There is no employment restriction over the summer.

Note that some fellowships, including the Doctoral Completion Fellowship (DCF) and U.C. Dissertation-Year Fellowship, are subject to other work rules, as outlined in their corresponding award notices and terms documents. **Salary from appointments does not count toward the stipend cap.**

Enforcement of Stipend and Employment Caps

Departments and graduate programs are responsible for complying with these caps when awarding fellowship funds and making student appointments. As indicated in applicable fellowship terms documents, fellows are themselves required to report any excess funding. Those whose funding packages violate these caps may have their Graduate Division fellowships reduced or rescinded. Exceptions to these rules are subject to review by the cognizant Associate Dean. Note that departments may also elect to apply these caps to their own funding or to establish additional restrictions of their own.

For additional guidance on these rules or assistance in applying them to specific funding cases, please contact the Fellowships office, gradfell@berkeley.edu.