



GRADUATE DIVISION
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Date: February 11, 2015

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

From: Fiona M. Doyle, Dean of the Graduate Division

Re: **Stipend Limits on Graduate Division Fellowships**

This memo explains the cap set by the Graduate Division on the amount of stipends paid to graduate students from central campus fellowships or departmental block awards or any combination of campus and external awards, and the rationale for the cap. In response to concerns that the cap on stipends inhibits recruitment of the most sought-after graduate applicants, this explains more thoroughly the requirements imposed on students and on departments, as well as permissible exceptions to policy.

In meeting our responsibility for effective and equitable stewardship of graduate student support funds, our objective is to distribute campus return-to-aid funds as widely and fairly as possible, given the limits of this primary funding source.

Should these caps adversely impact your competitiveness in recruiting top students, I encourage you to use existing departmentally-controlled endowment and gift funds to augment Graduate Division return-to-aid funds. I encourage you to be as thoughtful and strategic as possible in using them (subject to any limitations in gift terms) to accomplish your recruitment goals. The Graduate Division's Development team is available for consultation and assistance in designing fundraising strategies to expand the resources that are available.

Multiple Awards and Limits on Total Stipends from Central Funds

A student may become eligible for multiple awards during the same period, *e.g.*, when a student is eligible for a combination of Graduate Division fellowships or when a student receives an external fellowship in addition to a Graduate Division fellowship. In the interest of ensuring that certain funds are distributed widely and equitably, the Graduate Division sets limits on stipend amounts paid from Graduate Division funds.

Currently, Graduate Division funds may be used to pay stipends up to \$33,500 or to top off an external fellowship to \$33,500 during the twelve-month academic year -- fall, spring, and summer. (Note that some fellowships may have lower stipend limits or other rules concerning supplementation.) It is the responsibility of graduate programs to ensure that students who are

awarded stipends from block allocation funds do not exceed the \$33,500 cap. However, graduate programs may use departmentally-controlled endowment or gift funds to award or augment student stipends above the \$33,500 cap.

Students who accept a Graduate Division fellowship sign an agreement to notify the Graduate Division Fellowships Office should they receive other fellowships. It is the responsibility of graduate programs to monitor their students' receipt of awards and to notify the Graduate Division Fellowships Office when stipends, in combination, exceed the \$33,500 cap, with the exceptions noted below.

Categories of Graduate Division awards that are not included in the calculation of the total stipend cap are:

- Awards to cover specific expenses (*e.g.*, travel grant, research travel, FLAS stipend used to pay non-Berkeley fees, student parent grant);
- Awards for meritorious service (*e.g.* Teaching Effectiveness Awards for GSIs, Outstanding GSI Awards);
- One-time recruitment awards at the time of admission (*e.g.*, Power Top-Off, Diversity Top-Off).

Stipends whose fund source includes Graduate Division funds and, in combination, exceed the limit are subject to review by the Associate Dean for Fellowships; in such cases, the Graduate Division's funding may be reduced or rescinded. Exceptions to the stipend limit may be granted on an individual basis only by the cognizant Associate Dean of the Graduate Division. Note that departments may set their own additional restrictions.

Simultaneous Fellowships and Appointments

The terms of many fellowships prohibit or restrict students from holding employment during the term of the fellowship. Students holding most Graduate Division fellowships are subject to limits on work. Students earning an annual fellowship stipend of more than \$16,000 may work a total of only 25% time over the course of the academic year (not including summer). This can occur as one semester at a 50% appointment or as two semesters at 25% appointments. Salary from such appointments is excluded from the stipend cap calculation.

Graduate programs are responsible for ensuring that their students who hold GSI/GSR or other appointments comply with all fellowship terms. Students holding appointments that conflict with fellowship terms will have their fellowship reduced or rescinded to ensure compliance with fellowship terms.