

University of Pennsylvania
BIOMEDICAL GRADUATE STUDIES

Conditions of Fellowship Awards

BGS fellowships provide tuition, fees, health insurance, and a stipend for all eligible full time students in residence for a period of five years or as long as the student remains in good academic standing.

Graduate students who accept a fully-funded fellowship from BGS are expected to devote themselves full time to their program of graduate study. Students may not simultaneously accept another appointment or be employed either within or outside the University. Exceptions may be made only with the written approval of the Dissertation Advisor (if applicable), the Graduate Group Chair, and the Director of BGS.

Funds for BGS fellowships derive from a variety of University and extramural sources. Students are generally supported by a training grant and/or a University fellowship during the first two years of study and by a training grant and/or faculty research grant resources during the dissertation phase. Some students apply for and receive individual extramural fellowships from organizations such as the National Science Foundation or the National Institutes of Health. Students are expected to abide by the conditions of their funding source. For example, students appointed to a training grant must complete the required paperwork and participate in site visits relating to the grant, and students who receive multi-year individual extramural fellowships must prepare and submit annual renewal materials.

All BGS students must observe their graduate group's policies, BGS policies, and the University policies relating to graduate students. Each graduate group's policies can be found on its website, and the BGS and relevant University policies can be found via the BGS website. All students must complete the annual BGS bioethics requirement.

Stipends: BGS endeavors to provide a uniform stipend to all students. Stipends for BGS fellowships are paid in equal amounts at the end of each month. The current stipend level (for academic year 2004-2005) is \$25,000. Any supplementation of this amount must be approved by the Graduate Group Chair and the Director of BGS.

Cost of Education Allowances: On occasion, students may receive in addition to the stipend extra funds from a training grant or an extramural fellowship for education-related expenses, such as travel or the purchase of laboratory or computer equipment.

Taxes: All University and extramural fellowship awards in excess of tuition, general fee, and required course-related expenses (e.g., required books) are subject to Federal income tax. Even though they are taxable, the University is not required to withhold Federal taxes or issue an IRS W-2 form for non-service (i.e., institutional or training grant based) fellowships. Some fellowships (i.e., those funded by research grants or teaching assistantships) are also subject to Philadelphia city wage taxes, which are withheld from the paycheck. The University is not qualified to provide specific tax information. Students are urged to seek counseling directly from the IRS.

BGS Academic Calendar/Student Personal Time: BGS has a 12-month annual training program. While BGS generally adheres to the University's schedule for Fall and Spring course terms, many BGS courses do not observe fall and spring breaks. BGS students are expected to work full-time towards the degree but are entitled to take University staff holidays and two weeks per year for personal time. Students at the course-work stage should consult their graduate group chair with requests for any additional time off. Students at the dissertation stage may schedule time off only with the prior approval of their advisor.

Leaves of Absence: The University allows graduate students to take leaves of absence with the permission of the school only during the period prior to dissertation status (see the *Graduate Catalog-Rules and Regulations* for more details). Exceptions may be made for dissertation level students, most notably for medical reasons and for parental leave in association with the birth of a child (of up to one year). Student stipends are suspended during the leave period and are guaranteed upon return from leave under the conditions of the original award guarantee, i.e., through the initial five year award period.