



Ph.D. Student Affiliation and Backstop Funding Policy

Implementation Date: October 11, 2011

Revision Date: June 18, 2014

Purpose

To clarify Graduate School expectations regarding the financial obligation for Ph.D. student funding in the event that 1) a student affiliates with a department or program other than the umbrella admitting program to which the student was admitted, or 2) the student's advisor's funding expires.

Background

Full time Ph.D. students, who are in good academic standing and are making adequate progress toward their degree, are guaranteed financial support for their first five consecutive academic years beginning at the date of matriculation into the Graduate School. In order to make this guarantee, The Graduate School must have a Management Center backstop for each graduate student in order to protect each student from the potential loss of external funding during his or her projected years of study. Continued support is, as always, contingent on acceptable academic and research performance as determined in an ongoing manner by the student's advisor, Director of Graduate Studies, and committee where appropriate. The term "affiliate" is used in this document exclusively to mean the choice of a degree program open to Ph.D. students who have matriculated into an admitting program in which the student can complete the degree in any one of the programs or departments designated as affiliates of the admitting program.

Policy

1. In the event that a student selects a thesis advisor from a department or program other than the admitting department or program, and therefore opts to affiliate with the advisor's department or program to complete the Ph.D., the student should be funded in accordance with the compensation model of the department or program with which the student affiliates. Students must be advised by their admitting program Director of Graduate Studies that their stipend level will correspond to that practiced in the department or program of their chosen affiliation. Funding can be provided through any combination of departmental or competitive fellowship, teaching or research assistantship, or external support.
2. In the event that a Ph.D. student's thesis advisor is the primary source of the student's support and is unable to meet the five-year funding commitment, the student's support (tuition remission, fees, and stipend) will be covered by the department or program that receives the indirect cost revenues (ICRs) generated by the thesis advisor's grants until

such a time as suitable rearrangements can be made for renewed support. In most cases, such “backstop” support will come from the department in which the thesis advisor holds his/her primary appointment.

3. When a graduate student’s thesis advisor has a primary, tenure track appointments in one unit but the ICR revenue from the advisor’s grants flows to another organizational unit within Duke, such as in the University Institutes and Centers (UICs) that are jointly funded by the Provost Area Management Center (PAMC) and the Medical Center Management Center (MCMC), the backstop agreement will be as follows:
 - 50 percent from the UIC budget
 - 25 percent from Graduate School reserves, on behalf of the PAMC
 - 25 percent from School of Medicine graduate student reserves, on behalf of the MCMC
4. Backstop funding can be provided through any combination of departmental or competitive fellowship, teaching or research assistantship, or external support.

Procedure

1. Faculty advisors will be expected to commit and attest to the financial obligations outlined herein by completing and signing the attached form.
2. The Director of Graduate Studies Assistant (DGSA) of the admitting department or program should complete the form, obtaining all required signatures.
3. Electronic copies (pdf) of the completed forms should be uploaded into the student’s electronic record in ImageNow. [Please use these directions.](#)
4. For admitting programs in the School of Medicine an electronic copy should also be stored in the admitting program’s folder on the DGS server (found on a PC at: \\dhdsdata2\som_shared-som_private\dgs or on Mac at smb://dhdsdata2/som_shared/som_private/dgs).

Statement of Financial Support for Graduate Students whose Advisors old Primary Appointments outside their Admitting Department or Program

Student Name	Date
Student Signature	Duke Unique ID Number (Student)
Admitting Program/Department	Ph.D. Granting Program/Department
Thesis Advisor (PI):	Primary department of thesis advisor:

As thesis advisor to the above student and as department chair, division chief, or business manager for the thesis advisor, we commit to the following policy:

The thesis advisor is responsible for the financial support of this student, provided that the student is making satisfactory progress toward the doctoral degree. Such progress will be subject to ongoing review by the advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies of the department or program, and the student's committee, where appropriate. Support is normally offered for up to five calendar years from the date of the student's original matriculation into The Graduate School.

Financial support includes tuition remission, fees and a salary/stipend, determined annually by the Graduate School. If the advisor fails to provide this support, it will be provided by the department or unit which normally receives the indirect cost revenues generated by the advisor's/PI's grants. In most cases, this will be the department in which the advisor/PI holds his/her primary appointment. If the student receives another award or assistantship and the level is less than the established stipend and/or that required for tuition and fees, the difference will be supplied by the thesis advisor from other funds or by department/unit sources.

Thesis Advisor's Name	Signature	Date
DGS, Advisor's Department, Name	Signature	Date
Division Chief (Dept. of Medicine only)	Signature	Date
Department Chair Name	Signature	Date
DGS, Admitting Program, Name	Signature	Date