

# Financial Support and Benefits for Ph.D. Students



## Stipends

Generally speaking, The Graduate School provides Ph.D. students with a stipend for the first five years of their study to help cover living expenses. For 2017-2018, the 12-month stipends are:

Arts & Sciences and Nicholas School departments	\$30,550
Basic medical sciences and nursing departments	\$30,550
Engineering departments	\$30,550

The Graduate School benchmarks against peer institutions each year to ensure that its stipend is competitive. The Graduate School's stipends have increased by 22 to 31 percent since 2007-08, depending on the department.

## How Much Is That?

To put the stipend into context, annual research conducted by The Graduate School and the other nine schools at Duke estimated the total cost of room, board, local transportation, and personal and miscellaneous expenses at about \$24,800. According to the MIT living wage tool, the pre-tax annual living wage for one adult in Durham, North Carolina, was \$23,433. According to the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau, per capita income in Durham was \$29,626.

## Payment of Tuition and Mandatory Fees

Duke Ph.D. students' tuition and mandatory fees in their first five years of study are paid for by either The Graduate School or external fellowships.

In 2017-2018, total tuition for fall and spring was \$51,480 per year for students in their first three years of study, and \$7,120 per year for students in year 4 and beyond. Over the first five years of a student's study, that adds up to more than \$168,000 in tuition remission. Mandatory fees in the first five years of study add up to about \$5,700.

## Summer Support

Most Ph.D. students at Duke are guaranteed summer research fellowships for the summers after their first and second years. The fellowships provide a stipend and also cover tuition and fees.

## Financial Support in Year 6 and Beyond

After their first five years of study, students are responsible for their tuition and fees. More than four out of five Duke Ph.D. students in year 6 and beyond obtain external fellowships or departmental funding to help cover these costs. Many departments also offer stipend support as fellowships or as research, teaching, or graduate assistantships.

Departments differ in the financial support they provide to students in their sixth year and beyond. Prospective students should speak with their program's director of graduate studies for details.

[gradschool.duke.edu/support](https://gradschool.duke.edu/support)

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## Health Insurance

The Graduate School pays the health-insurance premiums (\$2,950 per year) for Ph.D. students in the first six years of their study if they are on the Duke student medical insurance plan. The Duke student plan is a platinum plan, the highest level of plans in the Health Insurance Marketplace. Students may add dependents to the plan at their own expense.

[bcbsnc.com/content/studentblue/duke/](https://bcbsnc.com/content/studentblue/duke/)

## Medical Expense Assistance Program

Since 2006, The Graduate School has offered financial assistance to Ph.D. students in the form of grants up to \$5,000 to help cover medical expenses that are not eligible for insurance reimbursement and which create a significant financial hardship.

[gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/medical-expense-assistance-program](https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/medical-expense-assistance-program)

## Childbirth and Adoption Accommodation

Since 2009, Duke Ph.D. students have been guaranteed a certain amount of paid time off from full-time graduate studies and duties after the birth or adoption of a child. Primary care givers receive nine weeks of accommodation. Non-primary care givers receive two weeks. Students who are on stipend support will continue to receive their stipends during the accommodation period.

[gradschool.duke.edu/student-life/students-children](https://gradschool.duke.edu/student-life/students-children)

## Childcare Subsidy

Since 2003, Ph.D. students who have children that require childcare can apply for subsidies of up to \$5,000 per year from The Graduate School. The subsidy is awarded for a maximum of three years, with exceptions considered for special circumstances.

[gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/child-care-subsidy](https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/child-care-subsidy)

## GradParents Student Group

The Graduate School maintains a support group for graduate students with children. The group provides additional support, family-friendly events, and networking opportunities.

[gradschool.duke.edu/student-life/students-children](https://gradschool.duke.edu/student-life/students-children)

## Professional Development

The Graduate School provides an extensive offering of professional development programs and resources to help students explore a wide range of career possibilities and obtain the skills and experience they need to compete for jobs in those careers. Offerings range from one-time workshops to semester- or yearlong programs. Students are encouraged to start taking advantage of these resources as soon as they begin their graduate studies at Duke.

[gradschool.duke.edu/professional-development](https://gradschool.duke.edu/professional-development)

## Short-Term Loans

In 2013, The Graduate School launched two loan programs—the Duke Credit Union Graduate Student Assistance Program and the Helen & Gordon McKinney Emergency Loan Fund—to help Ph.D. students with occasional, short-term financial needs.

[gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/loans](https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/loans)