Financial Information

The amounts and vehicles of financial support for graduate students are usually decided by individual Schools. Washington University is committed to funding most PhD students for 4-6 years, depending on the time needed to complete their particular program. Funding typically consists of full tuition remission and 10-12 months of assistantship pay or fellowship stipend to defray living expenses. Monetary support may come from the university or from outside sources, and it may be administered by an individual faculty member or by the staff of the program or the School.

Tuition Scholarships

Scholarships to cover part or all of the costs of tuition are available to both new and continuing students. Beyond the course work requirements for degrees, partial or full tuition scholarships covering the Continuing Student Status fee will be considered only for students who are receiving a fellowship from the Graduate School, an externally funded fellowship or traineeship that funds tuition remission at least partially, or an internally funded assistantship. Since perception of academic merit is the sole criterion for the award of tuition scholarships, they are not subject to taxation under federal tax law at this time.

Teaching Assistantships

Most PhD programs permit graduate students to work as teaching assistants. The duties of a teaching assistant vary widely across the disciplines. They may include assisting faculty in the preparation, instruction and grading of an undergraduate course; tutorial responsibilities; monitoring the laboratory segment of an undergraduate course; and, in some instances, full course responsibility. Teaching assistants are highly valued members of the Washington University instructional team. They are customarily trained by their program in the pedagogical skills required for their discipline. In addition, the Washington University Teaching Center conducts an annual university-wide orientation for all new teaching assistants, consults with the faculty on program-specific training, sponsors workshops on teaching, and helps instructors learn to use multimedia options in university classrooms. To recognize outstanding teaching by teaching assistants, the Dean's Awards for Teaching Excellence are given each spring. Awards include a certificate of recognition and a cash prize.

International students are required to pass a special pedagogy/ oral proficiency examination before serving as teaching assistants. Students often find the standards for reading, writing, and speaking English required of teaching assistants to be higher than the standards they previously met for admission. A comprehensive array of courses in English as a second language is available for international students who would benefit from it. Tuition remission for one such course per semester is usually available until students complete their credit hour requirement.

Domestic students who have demonstrated financial need according to certain federally specified criteria may be eligible for teaching assistantships supported by the Federal Work Study program. Eligibility for Federal Work Study can be determined only by analysis of detailed financial information that students being appointed as teaching assistants will be asked to provide.

Research Assistantships

Except in unusual cases, research assistantships are available only to doctoral students who have completed at least one full year of graduate study. They are generally, but not exclusively, found in the natural and social sciences, and are offered through departments, committee-run programs, and research centers. Research assistantships allow participation in collaborative enterprises of research and in the discipline's community of scholars.

Traineeships

Many degree programs, especially in the biological and behavioral sciences, fund students by means of traineeships. They may be awarded on an annual basis or may be renewable for periods up to three years, subject to satisfactory academic progress. Traineeships frequently emphasize research, but in the applied social sciences they might combine theory, research, and clinical experience in the field.

Fellowships

Fellowships, which provide a living stipend without requiring duties other than satisfactory academic progress, may be awarded to a student by the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, the student's degree program, or the student’s adviser. In addition, a student may apply for and win certain fellowships that are awarded directly to the student. These require administration by the Graduate School, which also administers two unique university-wide fellowships: the Chancellor's Graduate Fellowships and the Mr. and Mrs. Spencer T. Olin Fellowships. These awards provide year-round funding for four to five years. Prospective students must apply for them at the time of their application for admission, not after they have enrolled here as graduate students.

Loans

Federally underwritten loans are another centrally administered resource for students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Some funds are available through the Perkins Direct Student Loan Program. Stafford loans can be arranged for a larger number of graduate students. Applicants for these loans are required to submit both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Washington University Family Financial Profile (FFP). The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences determines eligibility and processes loan applications for all
PhD students at Washington University. For more information about applying for loans, please visit the Graduate School's Financial Information pages (http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/prospective_students/financial-information).

Financial Costs

Tuition Charges and Refunds
The maximum tuition fee is the equivalent of 12 semester hours. Students who enroll for 9 or more hours per semester are automatically regarded as full-time students and are charged a flat full-time rate. Students enrolled for fewer than 9 units are charged on a per-unit basis. The tuition rate is subject to annual change.

Requests for refund of tuition paid by a student who is withdrawing from a degree program should be made by submitting a Withdrawal Form to the Graduate School office. Requests for refund of tuition paid by a student who is withdrawing from a specific course should be submitted in writing to the Graduate School Registrar. The last date of class attendance is ordinarily used in determining the amount that can be refunded. Students withdrawing within the first two weeks of classes will receive a full refund; those withdrawing before the end of the fourth week pay 20 percent; those withdrawing before the end of the eighth week pay 40 percent. There is no refund after the eighth week of the semester except for reasons of health. Such reasons must be certified or verified by Student Health Services, in which case the university will make a prorated refund of tuition if notice of withdrawal is received before the end of the 12th week of the semester. Students who have had their full tuition remitted for them by their School or by a third party will not receive any refund.

Health Fees
All full-time students on the Danforth Campus are charged a mandatory health fee. This fee gives access to Student Health Services. In addition, full-time students on the Danforth Campus must either enroll in the student health insurance plan or present proof of comparable coverage. Both the health fee and the health insurance premium are subject to annual change. The Graduate School subsidizes both costs for most full-time fully supported students.

There is also a health fee for full-time students in degree programs based on the Medical Campus. It includes coverage equivalent to a health insurance plan. Details can be found at http://wusmhealth.wustl.edu.

Academic Fees
The academic fees discussed below apply to students who wish to maintain their degree candidacy during semesters in which they do not enroll for course work or research hours and to students eligible for full-time status despite enrollment for fewer than 9 semester hours. These fees are subject to change annually. Note that students receiving financial assistance from the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (fellowships, assistantships, etc.) are required to maintain full-time student status by registering either for at least 9 semester hours or for doctoral continuing student status.

Students who have completed the semester hours required for their graduate degree and who continue to make full-time progress toward completing that degree may register for continuing student status, which incurs a fee in most Schools but does not confer course credit. Students in this category are granted, without additional charge, normal use of laboratories, libraries, and other university facilities. The course number that confers continuing student status is also used by students who register for fewer than 9 semester hours in any term and wish to maintain full-time standing.

Doctoral nonresident status likewise incurs a fee and does not confer course credit. It is the required registration for students who have acquired full-time employment. Nonresident status does not imply geographical location but implies less than full-time involvement in graduate study; this registration is used only by part-time students. Students in this category can make normal use of most university facilities.

Students deciding how to register need to consider the consequences of part-time student status. Nonresident students have no financial aid from the university, no student health insurance or access to Student Health Services, no deferment of any federal student loans they have, and no right to rent university-owned housing. Also, most international students are required to maintain full-time status.