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 five to six years, depending on the time needed to complete their particular program. Funding typically consists of full tuition remission and 11 to 12 months of a 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.

Financial Support

Tuition Scholarships

Scholarships to cover part or all the costs of tuition are available to both new and continuing students. Since the perception of academic merit is the sole criterion for the award of tuition scholarships, such scholarships are not subject to taxation under federal tax law at this time.

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. These positions are generally (but not exclusively) found in the natural and social sciences, and they 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. These positions may be awarded on an annual basis, or they may be renewable for periods of up to three years, subject to satisfactory academic progress. Traineeships frequently emphasize research; however, in the applied social sciences, they may combine theory, research and clinical experience in the field.

Fellowships

Fellowships, which provide a living stipend, may be awarded to a student by the Graduate School, 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 (http://pages.wustl.edu/cgfp/) and the Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Fellowships (http://pages.wustl.edu/olinfellowship/). These awards provide year-round funding for the student’s defined program length. Prospective students must apply for these fellowships at the time of their application for admission, not after they have enrolled at Washington University as graduate students.

Loans

Federally underwritten loans are another centrally administered resource for students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Unsubsidized Stafford loans can be arranged for graduate students. Applicants for these loans are required to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The Graduate School 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 Support (https://graduateschool.wustl.edu/funding-support/) webpage.

Financial Costs

Tuition Charges and Refunds

The maximum tuition fee is the equivalent of 9 semester units. Students who enroll for 9 or more units 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.

A request for the refund of tuition paid by a student who is withdrawing from a degree program should be made by submitting a Withdrawal Form (https://graduateschool.wustl.edu/sites/graduateschool.wustl.edu/files/Withdrawal_Fillable.pdf) to the Graduate School office. A request for the 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%; those withdrawing before the end of the eighth week pay 40%. There is no refund after the eighth week of the semester except for reasons of health. Such reasons must be certified or verified by Habif Health and Wellness Center, 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 that gives them access to Habif Health and Wellness Center. In addition, they 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, and it includes coverage equivalent to a health insurance plan. Details can be found on the Student & Occupational Health Services (http://wusmhealth.wustl.edu) website.