

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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November 30, 2007

Memo to: Vancouver Senate

From: Student Awards Committee

Re: The Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) Award Guidelines (approval)

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The Senate Committee on Student Awards has reviewed and approved the proposed Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) Award Guidelines forwarded to it by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

***Motion:***

*That Senate approve the Award Guidelines established for the Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) including a) Types of Awards; b) Eligibility Criteria; c) Roles and Responsibilities of the Provost's Office, Faculties and Graduate Programs, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies; and d) Procedures.*

# Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) Awards

## Principles and Guidelines

### Underlying principles

In response to campus discussions about the replacement of the PhD tuition fee award program, a task force on graduate student strategy considered this issue in some detail. It agreed with the general consensus that the PhD Tuition Awards should be phased out and replaced with a more viable and sustainable means of graduate student support.

The Graduate Student Strategy Task Force developed a set of six principles to guide the development of the new graduate awards.

- 1) Support level. The total amount of annual University support for graduate students should be maintained, at a minimum, at the 2007/08 level.
- 2) Elimination of negative incentive. Faculty contributions to the PhD Tuition Fee Award, was perceived as a disincentive to graduate student admission and should be eliminated.
- 3) Flexibility. Considerations of effectiveness, timeliness, and efficiency argue in favour of Faculty-by-Faculty determination of the optimal arrangements with respect to graduate student support.
- 4) Recruitment and Excellence. Graduate student support programs should focus on recruiting excellent students and ensuring the conditions for their success.
- 5) Simplicity. UBC's programs of graduate student support should be simple to administer and the number of distinct funding programs should be minimized.
- 6) Grandparenting. The current Ph.D. Tuition Award program will be phased out over the next four years. All students currently eligible for that award will be "grandparented" for the duration of their eligibility. Complete details regarding eligibility for the PhD Tuition Fee Award may be found at the following link. <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/index.asp?menu=005,000,000,000>

### The Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) Award Guidelines

The Graduate Support Initiative is a new system for funding graduate students that adheres to the guiding principles. It allows for a flexible and recurring source of funding that each Faculty can use to support their graduate students in ways that meet their individual needs.

Requests to allocate GSI awards outside these general parameters should be referred to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. GSI cannot be used as payment for employment; nor to replace funding for TA-ships. Students enrolled in professional, full-cost recovery Master's programs are not eligible.

***Caveat:** Given the short time frame to develop these guidelines it is recommended they be reviewed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Senate Student Awards Committee after the first year.*

## **a) Types of Awards**

There are four possible types of GSI Awards that could be established by a Faculty and/or Graduate Program:

1. Entrance awards
2. Multi-year funding awards
3. Tuition awards
4. Scholarship top-up awards

## **b) Eligibility**

All domestic and international students who are registered full-time in the following degree programs could be eligible for the Graduate Support Initiative funding within their Faculty:

- PhD
- DMA
- Research-based Master's (course-based or thesis-based)

With respect to time in program (months of graduate study), eligibility for GSI Awards should follow existing Faculty of Graduate Studies practice, complete details of which may be found at the following link.

<http://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/index.asp?menu=004,003,000,000>

Each Faculty or functional equivalent (and/or their respective Graduate Programs) will establish and publish the particular criteria by which the GSI funds will be allocated after prior endorsement from the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

All eligible graduate students currently within a Graduate Program will be sent written information on the criteria for GSI Awards in their program. Applicants to eligible programs will be alerted to GSI funding opportunities and criteria through websites, publications and in response to formal applications for admission.

## **c) Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Provost's Office**

On an annual basis, beginning in the 2008-09 budget year, the Provost's Office will allocate to each Faculty (or functional equivalent) their portion of the GSI funding available based on a three year rolling average of their weighted Graduate FTE enrolments. The weightings will be: 4 for PhD students, 2 for Research Masters and 1 for course work Masters (excluding full cost-recovery programs). Each Faculty (or functional equivalent) will be advised of their overall weighted FTE allocation as part of the overall budget allocation process.

### **Faculties and Graduate Programs**

Once allocated their overall share of GSI funding, each Faculty or functional equivalent will determine annual allocations for their graduate programs and inform them as such. It is the responsibility of all Faculties and Graduate Programs to advise and seek approval of the Faculty of Graduate Studies of their published criteria for these awards. This oversight role will help to ensure consistency of practice across UBC.

### **Faculty of Graduate Studies**

The Faculty of Graduate Studies will administer these funds on behalf of the entire UBC community. This will streamline procedures, ensure the funds are paid to the students in the most efficient and timely manner, and allow for streamlined reporting of budget, usage and statistics to the Board of Governors and the Graduate Student Society. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will also play an oversight role to ensure funds are awarded according to the criteria established by the responsible Faculty and/or Graduate Program.

### **d) Procedures**

1. On an annual basis, the Provost's Office will inform each Faculty (or functional equivalent) and the Faculty of Graduate Studies of their GSI allocations.
2. On an annual basis each Faculty Dean's Office or their functional equivalent will inform the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the GSI allocation for each of their Graduate Programs.
3. Graduate Programs select graduate students for nomination and complete a University Award Recommendation Form for each award nomination. This form is available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies' Faculty/Staff Forms page.
4. Recommendation Forms for GSI Awards are forwarded to the Faculty of Graduate Studies – Dean's Office for processing.
5. Faculty of Graduate Studies will assign awards on the Student Information System. Graduate Awards are paid out in September, January and May. Please refer to <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/index.asp?menu=004,010,000,000> for detailed information on payment procedures and existing Senate Regulations on Graduate Awards.