

Guidelines for the Awarding of SGS Baseline Fellowships and Graduate Student Support

Preamble: Baseline Fellowships and Graduate Student Support play a vital role in recruiting and retaining graduate students at Memorial. Baseline Fellowships are also fundamental support for new graduate program development as well as new program credibility and competitiveness. Baseline Fellowships are often a graduate student's sole source of financial support. Further, Baseline Fellowships are essential financial leverage for faculty applying for and being successful in Tri-Council agency funding competitions. Graduate students who have adequate support through Baseline and other sources are integrated in and frequently leaders of Memorial University's research culture. Baseline Fellowships and Graduate Student Support make possible the very things for which we celebrated graduate students: community involvement and public engagement, cutting-edge research, and innovative teaching.

1. General principles

- 1.1.** SGS funds for the awarding of SGS Baseline Fellowships will be allocated to academic units by the Dean of Graduate Studies on a fiscal-year (April 1- March 31) basis for the support of their graduate students according to the following guidelines.
- 1.2.** SGS Baseline Fellowships are intended to form the foundation of graduate student support, a foundation that academic units should make every effort to supplement through Graduate Assistantships, external and/or internal grant applications, and/or supervisor grant or contract support.
- 1.3.** Recommendations for awarding SGS Baseline Fellowships must be forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies for approval and disbursement according to the criteria and procedures below.

2. Student Eligibility Criteria

- 2.1.** Students entering their programs must be registered as full time in a baseline supported Masters or PhD program and hold a valid Canadian study permit.¹
- 2.2.** Students entering their programs must normally have and maintain an overall MUN, or equivalent, average of 75%. An overall MUN, or equivalent, average of 75% is determined by using either the last 20 attempted courses for which grades are available, or by using all courses attempted for which grades are available excluding those in the first year of an undergraduate program.
- 2.3.** If departments wish to allocate SGS Baseline Fellowships to students who are not already on baseline funding and who are in-program, those students must normally have successfully completed at least one full semester of graduate studies and achieved a mark of at least 75% in each program course attempted or an overall average of at least 80% for all program courses attempted. Where the number of program courses is less than two, then the requirement is evidence of academic standing acceptable to the Dean.
- 2.4.** Masters students must be in the first 12 program-months for a one-year program and in the first 24 program-months of all other programs, excluding any leave periods.

¹ A full-time graduate student cannot commit more than 24 hours per week to employment. Any changes in a student's registration status will normally be made for a minimum of one semester. Normally, only one such change in status will be permitted in any one semester.

- 2.5. PhD students must be within the first 48 program-months, excluding any leave periods.
- 2.6. PhD students who transfer (or “fast-track”) from a Masters program must be within the first 60 program-months of their entire graduate registration at Memorial, excluding any leave period.
- 2.7. In exceptional cases, an academic unit may recommend an extension of SGS Baseline Fellowship eligibility for one additional semester beyond the periods outlined in 2.4 and 2.5 above.
- 2.8. A student who is the recipient of a major scholarship or award, and as a result is ineligible for a SGS Fellowship under 2.9 below, may be recommended in exceptional circumstances for a SGS Fellowship for one semester beyond the periods outlined in 2.4 and 2.5 above.
- 2.9. SGS Baseline Fellowships may not be awarded to Masters students receiving in excess of \$35,000 pa from all sources in a program year, excluding graduate assistantships. SGS Baseline Fellowships may not be awarded to PhD students receiving in excess of \$50,000 pa from all sources in a program year, excluding graduate assistantships.

3. Procedures for awarding SGS Baseline Fellowships (for students meeting eligibility)

- 3.1. SGS Baseline Fellowships will normally be offered at the time of admission for a one-year period. Details should be specified in the “Program of Study” form. If the admission is deferred, the SGS Fellowship may, on the recommendation of the academic unit, be deferred for a maximum of three semesters.
- 3.2. SGS Baseline Fellowships are renewable subject to the eligibility criteria (Section 2) and, in the case of thesis students, satisfactory annual progress reports. SGS Baseline Fellowships will normally be renewed at a value which is at least equal to that received in the offer of admission.
- 3.3. On commencement of a semester, academic units may recommend allocation of uncommitted or previously committed SGS baseline funds that become available to:
 - applicants, newly admitted students, or in-program students who were not offered SGS Baseline Fellowship support;
 - in-program students who did not meet eligibility criteria on admission but are being reconsidered on the basis of improved performance as in 2.3; or,
 - increase SGS Baseline Fellowship support to in-program students. Normally, such allocations will not be retroactive and will be in effect for the remainder of the student's eligible funding period, subject to renewal as in 2.4 and 2.5 above.
- 3.4. Students receiving SGS Fellowships who transfer (or “fast-track”) from a Masters program to a PhD program shall receive the standard baseline amount awarded to Masters vs. PhD students currently in place in the student's academic unit of record.² These funds are normally not retroactive, but are available at the beginning of the semester in which the student transferred. The cost will be attributed to the academic unit's SGS baseline.

² Every attempt should be made to minimize the financial impact to the student.

4. Administration of graduate student support (regardless of source)

- 4.1.** Graduate student support is paid bi-weekly. Academic units are responsible for initiating payments to students (including renewals) by submission of a Graduate Student Support Payroll form. It is also the responsibility of the academic unit to stop payments to students by means of the same form (e.g., program completed, leave of absence, academic standing, etc.).
- 4.2.** Recommendations for adjustments to the level or source(s) of bi-weekly funding received by any student must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies prior to the beginning of the semester in which these changes will take effect. Changes in SGS Baseline Fellowship amounts will normally remain in effect for the remainder of the student's eligibility period.
- 4.3.** Lump sum payments from sources other than the SGS Baseline Fellowship allocation may be made at any time, but will result in an adjustment of SGS Baseline Fellowship amounts for the program year if limitations in 2.9 above are exceeded.

5. Graduate Assistantships (GAs)

Graduate Assistantships are an integral part of graduate student funding. The remuneration for GA duties forms a portion of the student's financial support, and is normally awarded and paid on a semester basis. The duties to be performed by a student holding a GA will be assigned by the academic unit. Normally, a GA unit consists of 56 hours of work over a 14-week period within a semester (i.e., an average of 4 hours per week). GAs are governed by the Teaching Assistants' Union of Memorial University of Newfoundland (TAUMUN) Collective Agreement which is available online at: http://www.mun.ca/facultyrelations/TAUMUN_CA_FINAL.pdf.

6. Review

These guidelines will be reviewed every three years by the Dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with an *ad hoc* advisory committee with representation from the faculties of arts, science, medicine, engineering, a professional unit and the Graduate Students' Union (GSU).

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