

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
Scholarships & Awards Manual

Effective May 1, 2021

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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1. Introduction

The regulations in this manual apply if you have been selected to receive an award administered by the Graduate Scholarship Committee of the University of Alberta (UAlberta). This Manual is updated each year. The regulations and dollar amounts in this Manual are effective for 2021-22 awards and may change in subsequent years.

The information provided is based on the policies of the Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC) and on the procedures used in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) for the management of graduate awards.

The majority of the awards administered by the University of Alberta will be governed solely by the regulations published in this Manual. However, awards from other granting agencies may have published regulations that differ from, or are in addition to, those in this Manual.

For regulations regarding specific awards administered by the Graduate Scholarship Committee, please refer to [Section 14](#).

More information can be found at the [FGSR awards website](#).

If after reading this Manual you still have questions related to your University of Alberta graduate award, please contact Award Services.

Contact Awards Services:

Email: grad.awards@ualberta.ca

Local Telephone number: 780-492-9460

*Toll-free telephone number: 1-800-758-7136

Official Version

Once a document has been published on the [FGSR website](#), the only official copy of that document is the online version. The material can be printed if necessary, but the printout should be considered an unofficial copy. Before using printed material in any capacity, users should always check the online system again to ensure that they have the latest version of the material.

Unless explicitly stated otherwise in the terms of reference or offer letter for your award, the following definitions and regulations will apply:

2. Definitions

Any Scholarships, Fellowships, Prizes, Medals or Awards administered by the Graduate Scholarship Committee of the University of Alberta will be referred to as "awards".

2.1 Scholarships and Fellowships

Scholarships and Fellowships are intended to support future work and can only be awarded to students with first-class academic standing (equivalent to a grade point average of 3.5 or greater on the University of Alberta grading scale); additional selection criteria may be considered. Scholarships and Fellowships are awarded competitively. ALL graded courses (extra to degree, transfer credit, exchange) are included in GPA calculation.

2.2 Prizes and Medals

Prizes and medals recognize past accomplishments and are not intended to support future work.

2.3 Awards

Generally, awards are intended to support future work and are awarded competitively to students with satisfactory academic standing (equivalent to a grade point average of 3.0 or greater for awards offered to students newly admitted to a graduate degree program or a grade point average of 2.7 or greater for awards offered to students continuing in a graduate program); additional selection criteria may be considered, and may include financial need.

2.4 Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC)

A standing committee of the Council of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR), the GSC administers and adjudicates the various awards competitions, approves new awards, and develops policy for graduate awards managed by the University of Alberta. The information in this Handbook is based on policies approved by the Graduate Scholarship Committee. The GSC is chaired by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research or designate. More information on the GSC is posted on the FGSR website.

2.5 University Term

"University Terms" means the three terms in the academic year (i.e., Fall Term (September 1 to December 31); Winter Term (January 1 to April 30); and Spring/Summer Term (May 1 to August 31)).

2.6 Criteria used to Determine Academic Standing

The University of Alberta EDI Strategic Plan sets out a commitment to provide equitable access for students to scholarly opportunities and to address barriers to inclusion and success. Under this umbrella, the FGSR is committed to the equitable adjudication of all graduate scholarship applications. We will do this by evaluating academic achievement in a manner appropriate to graduate students that includes consideration not only of previous education, GPA and course work, but also research training, contribution and significance, and the impact of lived experiences on individuals and communities. Our adjudication processes will take into account graduate program types, a student's time in program, fundamental differences in approaches and contributions between research fields, and unique individual experiences that affect a student's success and the impact they have on society. Our aim is to review graduate scholarship applications in a manner that is inclusive of all programs, research areas, and individuals and in so doing to remove barriers to diversity in our graduate student award recipients.

3. Honorary Scholarships & Fellowships

You are encouraged to accept external awards offered to you, as doing so will not adversely affect your University of Alberta award, unless otherwise stated in [Section 14](#). Some University of Alberta graduate awards can be held in some form together with specific external awards. In some cases, the University of Alberta award is then designated as being an Honorary award, and its value, if greater than the value of the external award, may be reduced by the value of the external award. See [Section 14](#) for the specifics. Honorary scholarships are noted on your transcript.

4. Eligibility

4.1 Registration Status

- *Part-time*

Part-time students are not typically eligible, unless specified in the terms of reference for the award. If you are selected as the recipient of one of the limited number of department-specific awards for which part-time students are eligible, you are required to register either part-time or full-time in each term for the duration of the award.

- *Full-time*

Full-time students are required to be registered full-time in each Fall and Winter term.

** Students who commenced their thesis-based graduate degree program prior to Fall 2011 and were registered full-time during the Winter Term, are continuing in the same program, and plan to take up a new award in the Spring Term, will not need to register during the Spring and Summer Terms. However, you are required to register full-time in your graduate degree program for the following Fall and Winter Terms if the terms of the award require this.*

4.2 Research Requirement

Unless otherwise indicated in the terms of reference or eligibility description for a scholarship, award or prize, applicants must be engaged in a graduate degree program with a significant, independent research component that results in a peer reviewed research output (for example a thesis, dissertation, publication, performance, recital, or exhibit) that is a required part of the graduate program.

4.3 Graduate Certificate & Diploma Registrants

Students registered in Graduate Certificate and Diploma programs are not typically eligible, unless specified in the terms of reference for the award. If you are selected as the recipient of one of the limited number of awards for which Graduate Certificate and Diploma students are eligible, you are required to register in each term for the duration of the award.

4.4 Ineligible Student Categories

Qualifying students, special students, students on academic probation, and visiting students are not eligible to hold FGSR-administered awards, unless specified in the terms of reference for the award.

4.5 Years in Program

Unless otherwise stated in [Section 14](#) or specified in the terms of reference for the award, applicants registered in master's programs are eligible to hold awards during the first four years of their program. Applicants in doctoral programs are eligible to hold awards during the first six years of their program.

5. Payment of Tuition and Fees

Unless otherwise stated in [Section 14](#), you are responsible for paying your [tuition and related fees](#) directly to Financial Services. Your tuition cannot be deducted from your award stipend.

6. Concurrent Awards

- *University of Alberta Awards*

You may hold any number of University of Alberta awards (unless specified in the terms of the award) concurrently and at full value, except for certain combinations of awards as noted in [Section 3](#) and [Section 14](#).

- *External Awards*

The Graduate Scholarship Committee does not limit the number or total value of external awards that you may hold. However, the external agencies for these awards may have their own restrictions. You should consult the external agencies directly for their policies.

7. Employment While Holding an Award

7.1 Devotion of Hours to Degree

You are expected to devote most of your working time to completion of your graduate degree. Before you accept employment, for example, a graduate assistantship, first discuss this action with, and receive consent from, your supervisor and department to ensure your total workload is compatible with your activities as a full-time graduate student and award holder. Graduate students who work under the [CAST agreement](#) are treated as graduate assistants for matters related to awards.

7.2 Graduate Assistantships

If you accept awards from any source, and the regulations for the award(s) and your department permit, you may hold a graduate (teaching or research) assistantship at any point in the duration of your award(s) (but please also refer to sections 7.1 and 7.3). Certain University of Alberta awards stipulate or restrict the graduate assistantship duties you may perform. No decisions regarding assistantship appointments or their payment are made by FGSR; please contact your department or [Human Resource Services](#) with questions. For additional information contact the Graduate Student Association (GSA).

7.3 External Granting Agencies

External granting agencies may restrict the number of hours of employment permitted. Consult the external agencies directly for their policies in this regard.

8. Accepting or Declining an Award

8.1 Acceptance Required for Payments

Unless you are offered an award that does not require acceptance, you are required to accept the award offered to you in order to receive payments. To view the status of your award offer login to the Awards GSMS Portal. Instructions are available on [FGSR's website](#).

8.2 Acceptance or Declination Response Deadlines

A status of "Offer Made" will be present in your Award Applications panel if an offer has been made to you. You may accept or decline your offer online after reviewing your status letter and this Manual. Your letter of offer includes a deadline for acceptance/declination (30 days from the date of the letter of offer). If FGSR does not hear from you by the date stipulated in that letter, the award cannot be guaranteed beyond the deadline and it may be offered to another eligible student.

8.3 Deferrals

If you accept your award but wish to defer the date the award begins due to a program deferral or approved leave of absence, you must notify FGSR Award Services and your graduate department with the details of your case for specifics. These situations are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and your offer may be subject to expiration. To notify FGSR Award Services directly, you may email (grad.awards@ualberta.ca), phone, or send a message through the online Awards GSMS Portal by selecting the relevant award and clicking the Action "Send Request".

8.4 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

Acceptance of an award administered through the FGSR indicates that you understand that certain elements of your personal information may be shared for publicity or reporting purposes with the broader University community, the public (e.g. the University website) or certain agencies. Please note that any collection or sharing of information is collected under the authority of Section 33(c) of Alberta's FOIP Act for authorized purposes including admission and registration; administration of records, scholarships and awards, student services; and university planning and research. Students' personal information may be disclosed to academic and administrative units according to university policy, federal and provincial reporting requirements, data sharing agreements with student governance associations, and to contracted or public health care providers as required. For details on the use and disclosure of this information call the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at 780-492-3499 or see <http://www.ipu.ualberta.ca/>

9. Award Renewals & Progress Reports

9.1 Initiating a Renewal

If your graduate award is renewable and to ensure there is no disruption to your payments, it is your responsibility to initiate payment for your renewal year by logging into the Awards GSMS Portal at least 6 weeks before the start of your renewal year (instructions are available on FGSR's website). Any awards with the status "Awaiting Renewal" will be present in your My Awards panel. If eligible for renewal, your renewal will be authorized by the FGSR and may include changes to your award value,

status or duration.

9.2 Renewal Eligibility

To be eligible for renewal of your graduate scholarship, First Class academic standing (equivalent to a grade point average of 3.5 or greater) must be maintained, unless the terms of reference for the specific award indicate otherwise. All courses (extra to degree, transfer credit, exchange) are included in GPA calculation.

To be eligible for renewal of your graduate award, satisfactory academic standing (equivalent to 3.0) must be maintained, unless the terms of reference for the specific award indicate otherwise. All courses (extra to degree, transfer credit, exchange) are included in GPA calculation.

9.3 Additional Documents or Progress Reports

Renewals may require additional documentation or progress reports as required by the terms of the award. Follow all instructions on the GSMS website to ensure you have submitted all the required documentation.

10. Payment of Awards

10.1 Tenure and Value

The duration and value of your award are outlined in your letter of offer, available in the GSMS Awards Portal.

10.2 Payroll Deadlines

In order to ensure timely payment, acceptance must be received in FGSR well before the payroll deadline date of the relevant semi-monthly pay period, as defined by Payroll Operations, in which award payments are expected to begin (see the Payroll Operations [payment schedule](#) for details on pay dates).

10.3 Direct Deposit

Payment of awards is processed by direct deposit to your personal bank account. You must set up direct deposit in order to receive payment. You can set up and manage your [Direct Deposit on-line](#) in [BearTracks](#). Additional information is available on the [Human Resource Services](#) website.

10.4 Payment Disbursement

Award payments are made in arrears:

- Awards valued up to and including \$6,000 are paid in a one-time payment, within the time frame noted on the offer letter.
- Awards valued over \$6,000 up to and including \$11,999.99 are typically paid in two equal lump sums, usually at the beginning of each of two successive university terms, after confirmation of full-time

registration (if required). Such awards may have their second instalment cancelled after the first term, if the requirements of the award are no longer met.

- Awards valued at \$12,000 and over will be paid in equal semi-monthly instalments in accordance with [Payroll Operations'](#) semi-monthly pay dates over a 12 month period. Such awards may have their remaining instalments cancelled if the requirements of the award are no longer met.
- Some awards payments may not follow the schedule outlined above for reasons which may include specific payment structure dictated by an external agency. Please check [Section 14](#) for additional regulations, and/or review the terms of reference of the award.

10.5 Changes to Payment Disbursement

It is not possible to change the method and timing of payments. As noted in [Section 5](#), unless otherwise stated in [Section 14](#), you are responsible for paying your tuition and related fees directly to Financial Services. Your tuition cannot be deducted from your award stipend.

11. Income Tax

Currently, most awards income is non-taxable, though we note that the [Canada Revenue Agency](#) (CRA Individual income tax enquiries: 1-800-959-8281) regulations and Income Tax Act are subject to change at any time; please contact the CRA with questions about any income tax payable from award income.

12. Changes Affecting Your Award

It is your responsibility to notify FGSR in writing (grad.awards@ualberta.ca) or through the FGSR Awards GSMS Portal of any changes that will affect your registration, immigration, student or employment status, or affect the assessment of the international differential fee. Depending on the situation, the value of your award may be prorated or the award may be terminated.

12.1 Changes in Student Status

If a change to your student status makes you ineligible to hold all or some specific portion of your award, any award funding that you are not eligible to hold will be terminated on the date the change to your program is effective. You may be required to repay all, or a portion of, the award stipend (including any tuition and fees paid on your behalf). Please familiarize yourself with the guidelines of our "Forgiveness Policy" ([Section 12.5](#)). Changes affecting your award may include:

- Being placed on academic probation;
- Withdrawing from your program, being required to withdraw;
- Change in registration from full-time to part-time status;
- Change in program;
- Not being registered;

- Accepting another award that precludes holding concurrent awards;
- Change in employment status

12.2 Repayment of Funds

If for any reason you continue to accept award funds in excess of amounts forgiven under [Section 12.5](#) after you become ineligible for the award, or if the value of the award is prorated, you will be required to reimburse the University of Alberta.

12.3 Changes to Immigration Status

If your immigration status changes and you are no longer required to pay the international differential fee, or if you hold an award that provides payment of [tuition and fees](#), you may be required to repay all or a portion of the tuition and fees paid on your behalf or any payments you have received for a tuition and fees component.

12.4 Prizes

Prizes are awarded in recognition of past accomplishments. With the exception of the President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction (PDPD – see [Section 14.6](#)), you will not be required to return any portion of the prize monies received should your enrolment status change.

12.5 Forgiveness Policy

In the event of a change to your student status affecting your eligibility to hold an award, and unless otherwise stipulated by an external funding agency or by the terms of reference of an award, FGSR will not pursue a refund of award monies paid to the following situations:

- For an award valued at or under \$6,000, FGSR will not pursue a refund of award monies paid to you.
- For awards valued over \$6,000 up to and including \$11,999.99, if you have been paid for a university term in which you were registered, then FGSR will not pursue a refund of award monies paid to you, but will withhold the second half of the award if you do not register for the following university term.
- For awards valued at \$12,000 and over, FGSR will terminate semi-monthly installments based on the date the status change is effective.

This policy is enforced at the sole discretion of FGSR and may change at any time, without notice

12.6 Exceptions and Compelling Circumstances

Under certain compelling circumstances, exceptions to the rules in this Section may be approved by the Dean, FGSR (or designate). Compelling circumstances include unanticipated events unrelated to the academic program that could not have been avoided, such as medical emergencies, compassionate leave, or unique program requirements. The department should submit a written request to Award Services at grad.awards@ualberta.ca.

13. Program Completion and Awards

13.1 Thesis-Based Programs

For thesis-based programs, payment of awards will be terminated:

- For awards paid semi-monthly - at the end of the month following the month in which FGSR receives the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form. Tri-Council Awards will be terminated due to the completion of degree requirements. FGSR will follow Tri-Council regulations and FGSR's end-of-program registration deadlines re: submission of the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form to terminate Tri-Council award payments.
- For awards paid in one or two installments - the installment will be cancelled if there is no registration in the university term in which it was scheduled to be paid.

13.2 Course-Based Programs

For course-based programs, payment of awards will be terminated at the end of the month following the month in which FGSR receives the Report of Completion of Course-based Master's Degree form. If you have completed all coursework and are not required to register in a Fall/Winter term in which you hold an award, you may be allowed to continue holding the award if FGSR receives a confirmation from your department that you are working on your program while not registered. Tri-Council Awards will be terminated due to the completion of degree requirements. FGSR will follow Tri-Council regulations and FGSR's end-of-program registration deadlines.

14. Additional Specific Regulations

14.1 Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship

14.1.1 The scholarship is offered to students registered full-time in a doctoral program. The award may begin either May 1st or September 1st. The award is valued at \$45,000 for 12 months and it is renewable for a second 12-month period provided all renewal conditions, including first-class standing are met (refer to [Section 2.1](#)).

14.1.2. You are responsible for payment of your [tuition and fees](#). However, the scholarship will cover the International Graduate Student Differential Fee associated with full-time registration, if applicable. The differential fee, if applicable, will be paid directly to [Financial Services](#) on your behalf. If your immigration status changes and you are no longer required to pay the differential fee, any inapplicable portion of the international differential fee paid on your behalf must be returned to the University of Alberta.

14.1.3 You may hold any number of University of Alberta awards concurrently with the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship.

14.1.4 If you win an external scholarship you are required to accept the external award, and to inform FGSR of your offer. The Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship might then become Honorary (see [Section 3](#) for details). The Honorary Killam Scholarship is renewable for a second year (subject to the conditions outlined in [Section 9](#)), and you must complete a renewal request online through the Awards

GSMS Portal and submit it to the FGSR for a renewal to be activated (see [Section 9.1](#) for details). A full-value Killam Scholarship is available in the renewal year (subject to the conditions outlined in [Section 9](#)) should the external award not be available for a second year.

14.1.5 Before commencing your Killam Scholarship, you may defer it for up to a maximum of one year, but only for reasons of maternity, child rearing, illness, or health-related family responsibilities. You may not defer your award in order to take up another award, or to accept or hold employment, or to pursue studies other than those for which you received funding. You must request the deferral as soon as possible **but no later than one month after** the scheduled start date of your award. You must be on an approved leave of absence from your program to be eligible for the deferral.

14.2 University of Alberta Graduate Recruitment Scholarship

14.2.1 The scholarship is offered to University of Alberta applicants who will be registered full-time in a thesis program after the offer of the award. The award commences in your first term of registration. The award value and duration vary. Additional program-specific conditions may also apply.

14.2.2 You are responsible for payment of your [tuition and fees](#).

14.2.3 You are strongly encouraged to apply for a scholarship from one of the [Tri-Council agencies](#) (CIHR, NSERC, or SSHRC), if eligible. The expectation is that you will also apply for all other scholarships for which you are qualified during the duration of the Recruitment Scholarship.

14.2.4 You may hold any number of FGSR-administered University of Alberta awards concurrently with a Recruitment Scholarship.

14.2.5 If you win an external or non-FGSR administered award, you will retain your University of Alberta Recruitment Scholarship unless prohibited by non-FGSR external funding regulations.

14.3 Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize

14.3.1 This prize is valued at \$5,000 and is available to full-time doctoral students who have completed two or more years of their doctoral program and are actively engaged in thesis research at the time of the award offering.

14.3.2 You may hold any number of awards concurrently with an Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize.

14.4 University of Alberta Graduate Entrance Scholarship

14.4.1 The Graduate Entrance Scholarship replaces the Master's Entrance Scholarship from previous years. The scholarship is offered to University of Alberta applicants who will be registered full-time in a doctoral and master's degree program. The award is valued at \$17,500 for master's and \$21,000 for doctoral and it may commence September 1st or January 1st. The scholarship is not renewable.

14.4.2 You may hold any number of University of Alberta awards concurrently with this scholarship, however you cannot hold the Tri-Council Top-up awards including Walter H Johns Graduate Fellowship and President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction and the Graduate Entrance

Scholarship tuition fee top up at the same time.

14.4.3 If you win and accept an external award, you must inform FGSR about your external award offer. Your University of Alberta Graduate Entrance Scholarship may become Honorary. If your tuition and fees are covered by another award, whether external or from University of Alberta, your tuition and fees will not be covered by your Graduate Entrance Scholarship.

14.4.4 This scholarship will also receive a top up amount applied directly to your tuition and fees. Please refer to the FGSR website for the current value per year. Any tuition and fees above and beyond the top up are the responsibility of the student to pay.

14.5 Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship

14.5.1 The Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarships (AGES) recognize outstanding academic achievement of students pursuing graduate studies in Alberta. Students must be registered full time in a course-based Master's degree program or thesis-based Master's or Doctoral degree program, a Master's degree program or a graduate level credential program that can ladder into a Master's degree program, approved by the Minister of Advanced Education.

14.5.2 The full-value of the Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship will be paid in one lump sum before March 31. Please note that the payment schedule for this award differs from the standard schedule as outlined in [Section 10](#).

14.5.3 You are responsible for payment of your [tuition and fees](#).

14.5.4 You may concurrently hold any number of University of Alberta awards with the Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship. This scholarship is not renewable, but your department may nominate you for a new award in each year during which you meet the eligibility requirements.

14.5.5 Indigenous students may apply for the Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship through the Faculty/Department that they reside in or directly to the FGSR. A student may only hold one Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship in a given academic year.

14.6 President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction

14.6.1 The prize is awarded to students registered full-time in a doctoral degree program who have won one or more of a [specific list of external doctoral-level scholarships](#). The prize is valued at \$10,000 in the first year that you hold the eligible external award. For subsequent years that you hold an eligible external award, the PDPD has a value equal to that of the Walter H Johns Graduate Fellowship (see [Section 14.7](#)).

14.6.2 You cannot receive PDPD payments in those terms in which you do not receive payments from your eligible external award.

14.6.3 This prize is awarded automatically. No additional application is required.

14.6.4 You are responsible for payment of your tuition and fees, including the international differential fee, if applicable.

14.6.5 Recipients of [eligible scholarships](#) will be awarded the President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction (PDPD). Recipients of eligible NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR, Vanier, or Trudeau Foundation Awards should forward their Notification of Award, and their email accepting that award, 6 weeks in advance of their start date, to the FGSR Awards team via email at grad.awards@ualberta.ca.

14.6.6 The PDPD will be paid upon receipt of the Payment Activation Form. The Payment Activation Form should be uploaded to GSMS at the time the recipient accepts the PDPD offer. Please refer to the external award's website for the payment activation form. Renewal of the PDPD is contingent upon the successful renewal of the eligible scholarships. Please refer to Section 9 for more information on renewing your scholarship.

14.6.7 As long as you are continuing to hold the eligible external doctoral-level scholarship, you can continue to receive payments beyond regular eligibility as identified in [Section 4.5](#).

14.6.8 This funding is not guaranteed, and is subject to availability each year.

14.7 Walter H Johns Graduate Fellowship

14.7.1 The fellowship is awarded to students registered full-time in a graduate degree program who hold eligible Tri-Council master's-level scholarships. Please see the [website](#) for the current value or contact Scholarship Services at grad.awards@ualberta.ca.

14.7.2 You cannot receive WHJ payments in those terms in which you do not receive payments from [your eligible external award](#).

14.7.3 You are responsible for payment of your [tuition and fees](#).

14.7.4 Recipients of eligible scholarships will be awarded the Walter H Johns Graduate Fellowship upon receipt of the Graduate Award Acceptance Form of the eligible Tri-Council scholarship. You will need to accept this award through GSMS.

14.7.5 This funding is not guaranteed, and is subject to availability each year.

14.8 FGSR Graduate Travel Awards

For detailed regulations, please consult the [FGSR website](#). You are not required to accept this award. It will be automatically paid to you following the offer.

14.9 Departmental and Interdepartmental Awards

GPA for departmental and interdepartmental awards are calculated using a minimum of 15 credits in the current program. If there are less than 15 credits, the Admission Grade Point Average (AGPA) is used in combination with the current program. If there is no graded coursework, the AGPA of the current program (or newly admitted program) will be used. NOTE: The Terms of Reference will always supersede this calculation.

14.10 Friends of the University of Alberta Society Graduate Award

This fee based award will directly pay up to \$5000.00 of tuition. Any funds not used are returned to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.