



**Graduate School**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

DATE: November 18, 2024

TO: School/College Deans  
Department Chairs  
Directors of Graduate Study  
Graduate Program Coordinators

FROM: Charles L. Isbell, Jr., Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs *CL*  
Robert Cramer, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration *RC*  
William J. Karpus, Dean of the Graduate School *WJK*

RE: FY26 Graduate Assistant Stipend Minima and Principles

The Graduate School, in consultation with the Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, sets the minimum rates for GA and fellowship titles (UW-1238). Graduate stipends serve a dual purpose of providing resources to defray students' living expenses while pursuing an advanced degree and allowing graduate programs to compete in the market with peer institutions/programs. With the fall 2024 graduate student application process for fall 2025 enrollment well underway, this memo reiterates the FY26 **MINIMUM** graduate assistantship (GA) rates that were communicated in [stipend forecasting plan released March 15, 2024](#). The plan forecasts graduate student minimum stipends through FY28 and allows for faculty, programs, departments, and schools/colleges to plan accordingly. Moreover, the plan considers multiple aspects of graduate student support in addition to stipends.

The rate-setting procedure allows departments/programs to set market stipends for all GA mechanisms (RA, TA, PA, and LSA), making it simpler for prospective graduate students to compare offers from UW-Madison and other institutions, thus helping us compete for top students. Use adjustments to the dollar amount, and not changes to appointment percentage, to set stipends.

Programs/departments (**with approval from their school/college**) are required to determine and submit their FY26 assistantship rates to the Graduate School by **December 31, 2024**, via Google document link [here](#). The actual graduate assistant stipend dollar amounts (per 50% appointment) that the department/program will pay should be entered in the worksheet. For example, if the program/department plans to pay graduate assistants (TA, PA, RA) the minimum stipend, enter that dollar number. If the program/department plans to supplement the minimum GA stipend with gift or other funds, enter the total dollar amount for the 50% assistantship appointment into the worksheet.

The following principles should be considered as you determine rates for FY26:

- Graduate programs/departments will work with their school/college dean's office to establish rates at or above the campus minima, allowing for flexibility to accommodate different market factors while maintaining the principle that graduate students will not get a stipend cut from the previous year.
- Despite the increase in the minimum rates, those departments/programs that pay above the minima are expected to maintain or exceed their previous year's efforts.
- The Graduate School's *Academic Policies and Procedures* describes [maximum levels of appointments](#) and [concurrent appointments](#).

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## 2 GA rate setting memo\_FY26

- Graduate students appointed as an RA must be paid the rate associated with the academic program where they are enrolled. If a graduate student is appointed as an RA in a different department, they are paid at the rate associated with their academic program (enrollment) home. Graduate students appointed as TA, LSA or PA are paid the rates associated with the hiring program/department.
- When making admissions offers for Fall 2025 enrollment, departments/programs must indicate to applicants in writing a 4- or 5-year funding package guarantee, contingent on satisfactory academic and GA appointment progress and availability of funds. When making an offer of admission with a financial commitment, departments/programs must abide by the Council of Graduate Schools [April 15 resolution](#), to which UW-Madison is a signatory.
- Students supported by internal or external fellowships or training grants that have stipends below the department/program rate must be supplemented to the department/program rate.
- For Fund 101-funded TA, PA and LSA students, the Budget Office will provide a base supplement in your 2025-26 budget planning allocations to cover the cost of the increase.

The FY26 GA and fellowship **MINIMUM** funding rates are as follows for all new and continuing appointments and are effective for annual appointments on June 29, 2025, and for academic appointments on August 18, 2025. All active appointments in the current fiscal year must adjust stipend rates accordingly on these dates.

### **Teaching assistantship (per 50% appointment)**

Academic: \$29,157

### **Lecturer Student Assistant (per 50% appointment)**

Academic: \$31,975

### **Project assistantship (per 50% appointment)**

Annual: \$35,636

Academic: \$29,157

### **Research assistantship (per 50% appointment)**

Annual: \$35,636

Academic: \$29,157

### **PA grader/reader**

Hourly rate: \$28.41

### **University Fellowship, Advanced Opportunity Fellowship, and Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship (100% appointment)**

Annual: \$35,636

Academic: \$29,157

### **Undergraduate Assistant (per 50% appointment)**

Annual: \$25,584

Hourly: \$24.60

cc: Jennifer Mnookin, Chancellor  
Dorota Grejner-Brzezinska, Vice Chancellor for Research  
David Murphy, Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration  
Natalie Feggestad, Madison Budget Office  
Patrick Sheehan, Chief Human Resource Officer, Office of Human Resources  
Petra Schroeder, Associate Vice Chancellor, OVCR  
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