Graduate Funding

Funding

Applicants who are admitted to the Political Science Graduate Program are considered for merit-based funding. No funding application is required. Our funding offers are aimed at supporting full-time graduate study with intensive research and teaching experiences. The strongest applicants are offered five years of funding from the department, provided satisfactory progress is maintained. We draw on fellowship, research assistantship, teaching assistantship, and summer funding resources in making competitive funding offers.

Full-funding awards, regardless of the categories of funding, amount to over $50,000 for the 2017-2018 academic year. This consists of a 3-quarter tuition waiver; a quarterly stipend of $6885 per quarter ($20,655 per year with three quarters of funding); and health insurance with medical, dental, and vision coverage for each quarter of fellowship or employment as an RA or TA. The stipends increase as one moves through the graduate program in reaching the MA and PhC milestones. As well, students benefit from union-negotiated salary increases.

Students are responsible for paying approximately $423 in quarterly student fees.

Departmentally-Awarded Fellowships

The department awards several prestigious fellowships for first year students. Named for a prominent professor of Political Science and a past Dean of the UW Graduate School, the J. Allen Smith Fellowship provides several new students with an opportunity to pursue their own research. In addition the admissions committee draws from the Donald R. Matthews Fellowship in American Politics, the Helen E. Christopherson Fellowship, and the Paul Speyer Scholarship and Fellowship to award additional promising graduate applicants fellowship support. Fellowship recipients are matched with a faculty mentor for the duration of the fellowship.

Other UW and External Fellowships

There are also a number of other UW and external fellowships for which prospective students may apply. Administered by the University of Washington's Jackson School of International: the Foreign Language and Area Study Fellowship (FLAS) for intermediate or advanced study of approved foreign languages is available to prospective domestic students. The deadline is in January. For information and application materials please contact: http://jsis.washington.edu/advise/flas/. Information on other Jackson International and Area Fellowships for current and some prospective students can be found at the same site.

China Studies and other Jackson Programs require nomination by our department. Many of the fellowships are renewable for two or three years and we currently have first year and advanced students with fellowships in China Studies, Korean Studies, Russian Studies and REECAS (Russia, East Europe and Central Asia).

Additionally, the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies offers the Martha H. Duggan Fellowship, providing tuition and support for living or educational expenses for graduate students whose work focuses on labor. Preference for the award is given to students committed to researching or serving those who provided caring labor, or who themselves have provided caring labor or assisted partners or other family members in gaining advanced education.

Other non-UW external fellowships and awards for current graduate students can be found at this Graduate School site: http://www.grad.washington.edu/students/fa/index.shtml.

Fellowships to Support a Diverse Student Body

The University of Washington values the intellectual and social enrichment provided by those with varied personal experiences or who are from educationally or economically disadvantaged backgrounds and it designates financial resources to support these students. The Political Science department has been successful nominating under-represented applicants for the merit-based Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP) awards. These awards are for Research Assistantships and for Graduate Diversity Fellowships. Several of the later are two-year fellowships. These fellowships are
only available to US citizens and permanent residents.

Research Assistantships (RA)

Research assistantships provide a combination of employment and professional training in research. No application is required for a RA position as applicants will be considered for these opportunities as part of the admissions process and as openings arise. Students with research assistantships gain the valuable experience of working with faculty on a faculty research project or in an affiliated research center. Examples of centers directed by Political Science faculty are: the Center for American Politics and Public Policy, the Center for Communication and Civic Engagement, the Washington Institute for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, and the Center for Labor Studies. The time commitment for research assistants is a maximum of 20 hours per week.

Teaching Assistantships (TA)

Teaching assistantships provide graduate students with a combination of employment and professional training in the teaching of political science. Teaching assistants are assigned to large undergraduate courses, usually in their major fields of interest, and are provided with office space. Duties include attending lecture, teaching quiz sections (subgroups of the large lecture), and grading papers and assignments. Political Science teaching assistants are also employed by the Department of English's Interdisciplinary Writing Program. These TAs teach writing skills to Political Science undergraduates. The time commitment is 20 hours per week.

In addition, the College of Arts and Sciences and the department provide funding to hire advanced Political Science TAs for positions as Lead TA, Director of the Writing Center and Computer Lab Assistant. The writing center Director works 20 hours per week in the Political Science Advising Office.

Summer Funding

Continuing students who are on campus during the summer are typically engaged in a variety of activities that provide financial support: on fellowship; as Research Assistants with faculty and research centers; in department hourly positions such as in the advising office; or in language study on FLAS or other foreign language fellowships. More advanced students are often abroad on language and dissertation grants and are studying or conducting fieldwork. Many of our graduate students who have reached Candidacy teach independently in the Political Science department summer programs.

Funding After the First Year

Funding from the department after the first year is usually in the form of TAships. A number of continuing students have opportunities as RAs or in special assignments as described above or statistical consulting. Continuing students are eligible to apply for department graduate research awards, travel grants, and compete for graduate paper prizes and teaching awards.

The department has also been successful in funding advanced graduate students who are beyond eligibility for TAships and many graduate students find Teaching Assistant positions in areas related to their research in other social science departments. Almost all advanced students teach at least one independent class before leaving this degree program. (With a number of universities, colleges, and community colleges in the area, many graduate students find part-time employment teaching classes outside the University of Washington as well.) Moreover, students are encouraged to compete for dissertation fellowships that are offered both by the department and by the UW Graduate School.

Students frequently engage in the entrepreneurial work required of scholars by applying for funding outside the department. Many Political Science comparativists with an area studies interest have been awarded Foreign Language and Area Study Fellowships (FLAS) for advanced language study and research. Political Science graduate students also regularly receive prestigious national fellowships, such as those offered by the Fulbright Commission, Social Science Research Council, and National Science Foundation.

Funding Renewal After the First Year

During the first five years of guaranteed funding eligibility all Graduate students must reapply annually for the renewal of their eligibility. Funding applications are reviewed by the department's Financial Aid Committee, which is comprised of four faculty. Students who maintain satisfactory progress will retain their funding eligibility. (see “Political Science Department Policies Governing TA and other Department Funding Eligibility Renewal” in the Graduate Student Guide).

Washington State Residency
Although the university provides out-of-state students who are employed in graduate assistant positions with waivers of non-resident tuition, the department strongly encourages all US citizens, permanent residents, and those with Refugee status or holding eligible visas to begin the process of establishing Washington residency upon their arrival in the state. Having residency can be critical in the event of unfunded quarters as Washington state residents pay almost 60% less in tuition than their out-of-state counterparts. Residency for tuition purposes is unavailable to those holding F or J visas.

**Student Loans**

Students who have additional financial need may apply for student loans or work-study. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available from college Financial Aid Offices (including from UW) or may be completed and submitted online. For priority consideration, your FAFSA must be dated as received by the federal application processor according to the current deadline.