

To: ALL FACULTY, FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
From: JAYNE GARLAND, DEAN
Date: March 25, 2025
Re: Graduate Student Funding Policy – Faculty of Health Sciences

FHS PhD Student Policy Statement

Supervisors of PhD students are required to contribute \$3,000 annually during the funding eligibility period toward the guaranteed funding package of each PhD student. This applies to all new and current PhD students. Supervisors unable to provide the \$3,000 will not be eligible to take **new** PhD students, effective immediately; however, any offers already made to PhD students for 2025-2026 will be honoured.

Supervisor funding contribution may come from external grants, startup funds, or internal research grants, if permitted under the terms of the grant. This policy applies to students in the following graduate programs: (i) Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (HRS)¹, (ii) Kinesiology, (iii) Nursing, and (iv) Neuroscience. The academic year for a PhD appointment will be from September 1 – August 31, regardless of start/program entry. Students that join mid-year will have their packages pro-rated accordingly.

The \$3,000 annual contribution should be in the form of a Graduate Fellowship (GF). The Graduate Fellowship amount will be paid to students in the summer term (May – August). If a student receives a scholarship (\$15,000 or more) for the next academic year but elects to activate the award early (May instead of September), then the student will receive the original FHS funding package for the summer term, including receiving the \$3,000 supervisor contribution. Supervisors will still be required to contribute the supervisor contribution for the current academic year. The student and supervisor will fall under the appropriate scholarship funding model for the upcoming academic year (September through to August).

Graduate Student Assistantships (GSA) may be permitted in circumstances where funding agencies require this form of payment. This should be in exceptional circumstances and must be identified and discussed with the Graduate program administrative team at the time of funding offer.

Supervisors who top up the minimum funding package (i.e., contribute more than \$3,000) must provide clarity for their students as to the total funding that the student is expected to receive that year. The additional top up may be provided in any term.

For students co-supervised by two research supervisors, a total annual contribution of \$3,000 is required per PhD student. This could be split between the two research supervisors, or paid by one supervisor, depending on their respective funding circumstances. Often there are nominal co-supervisors who might not be expected to contribute.

Typical minimum funding packages comprise of 210 hours of Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA), the supervisor contribution, and Western Graduate Research Scholarship (WGRS).

¹ Although the funding eligibility period for HRS combined program students is typically 5 years, supervisors of these students are required to contribute annually for years 1 through 4 for a total of 4 years (i.e., a contribution similar to that for students in PhD only programs).

Students who decline any part of the GTA will have their funding package reduced by the equivalent funding. Supervisors who do not wish their student to accept any part of the GTA will be required to provide equivalent funding for the minimum funding package in the form of a GF or GSA.

PhD students with *total* funding from scholarships (whether internal [donor funded], or external, including sponsored international students) that exceeds the minimum funding package of \$23,360 (e.g., doctoral awards from CIHR, SSHRC, NSERC of \$40,000*) will not receive a top up WGRS, but they will remain eligible for up to 210 hours of TA.

Combined PhD students who are in the professional program component of their degree with *total* funding from scholarships (whether internal [donor funded] or external, including sponsored international students) that exceeds the minimum funding package of \$23,360 (e.g., doctoral awards from CIHR, SSHRC, NSERC of \$40,000*) will not receive GTA funding for the two years in the professional program and will not receive WGRS funding as a substitute.

PhD students with *total* funding from scholarships (whether internal [donor funded] or external, including sponsored international students) between \$15,000 and the minimum funding package of \$23,360 will receive a top up WGRS of \$5,000 and will be eligible for up to 210 hours of TA.

PhD students with *total* funding from scholarships (whether internal [donor funded] or external, including sponsored international students) between \$10,000 and \$14,999 will require a supervisor's contribution of \$3,000 per year. These PhD students will also receive a top of WGRS of \$5,000 and will be eligible for up to 210 hours of TA.

At the supervisor's request, a supervisor can fund the full \$12,000 for one or more PhD students at the outset (so no concerns about grants that may conclude during the course of the students funding). This funding must be issued within the research project start and end dates, while the student is actively enrolled in the PhD program.

For Health Information Sciences (HIS) PhD students, in which case the PhD guaranteed funding package is provided 50:50 by FHS and FIMS, supervisors whose primary Faculty appointment is in FHS are required to contribute \$3,000 annually toward the PhD guaranteed funding package of each HIS PhD student. HIS PhD student supervisors whose primary Faculty appointment is in FIMS will follow FIMS policies relating to graduate student funding.

This policy will be placed on the FHS website and will supersede any prior policies. Procedures will be provided and shared in the applicable graduate programs.

*Note. Tri-council doctoral award funding examples in this document are based on September 2024 award amounts