

Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Funding Policy Framework

Guidelines for Thesis-Based Graduate Programs

1. Purpose

This document outlines the guidelines for studentship applications and the expected top-up funding from supervisors for successful external/internal awards. The primary purpose of funding thesis-based students is to provide financial support for full-time studies, in the absence of significant professional work. Working professionals (e.g., clinical graduate programs in Dentistry, the Clinical Investigator Program, Residency Programs, and Laboratory Medicine and Pathology programs) may not be eligible for stipend support from their supervisors or program and are encouraged to pursue the self-funding option. Generally, graduate students enrolled in full-time programs in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (FoMD) cannot be self-funded and will only be considered under exceptional circumstances. Students fully funded by an external agency (such as a foreign scholarship or bursary) to a level equal to or greater than the program-specified minimum funding amount may be admitted without additional funding.

2. Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. Consistency in Stipends

Supervisors are expected to ensure consistency in stipends among students within the same laboratory and at similar stages in their programs when receiving funds from a supervisor's operating grant and/or program-level support.

2.2. Future Compliance

Effective September 2025, supervisors cannot accept any new students until all their current students receive funding equal to or greater than the base funding set out in this policy.

2.3. Additional Responsibilities

Supervisors must provide at least three months' notice in writing if they cannot continue stipend/scholarship support beyond the program stipulated time frame.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that students receive appropriate top-up amounts for external/internal awards as outlined in the Impact of Scholarship Awards section.

3. Student Eligibility and Program Requirements

3.1. Full-Time Status and Attendance

To be eligible for financial support, students must be registered full-time and actively participating in their program. This includes meeting reasonable expectations for attendance and research activity as determined by the supervisor/supervisory committee and program.

3.2. Other Academic Requirements

Students must also remain in good academic standing within their programs. This includes maintaining a B average (3.00/4.00) with no grade lower than B- in any graduate course, along with meeting other program requirements. They must also demonstrate satisfactory research engagement and progress, as indicated by the Annual Progress Report.

4. Base Funding

4.1. Definition and Initial Information

Base funding represents the essential financial support provided to students, ensuring they possess sufficient resources to pursue their studies without significant financial strain. For PhD students, this is defined as the minimum funding requirement set by FGPS, currently \$25,000 per year for four years. For Master's students, base funding aligns with the FGPS Graduate Research Assistantship Funds (GRAF) amount, provided for two years.

4.2. Components Included in Base Funding

The following count toward meeting the minimum funding amount:

- Stipend/scholarship payment from the supervisor's research grant.
- External scholarships, including, but not limited to, SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR, AIHS, AITF, AGES, and charitable organizations.
- Internal scholarships, including faculty and university competitions.
- GTA and GRA income over \$2,500 a year.

4.3. Exclusions from Base Funding Calculation

Income from the following sources does not count toward the student's base funding amount:

- The first \$2,500 of GTA and GRA income.
- Travel awards and research allowance.

- Research Prizes (e.g., Poster awards, American Physiological Society APS Student Research Recognition Award, MEDSTAR Award, Dick Stein Memorial Research Prize, Andrew Steward Memorial Prize).

5. Impact of Scholarship Awards

Base funding constitutes the minimum financial support provided to students. Nevertheless, students are obligated to actively seek external and internal awards to supplement their base funding. Students are responsible for reporting any awards received to their graduate program administrator and department within 30 days of receiving a notification of the award. The following outlines how the receipt of such awards impacts the base funding, including the conditions under which additional top-up amounts shall be granted to recognize students' efforts.

5.1. Scholarship Value and Top-Up Amounts

Success in internal and external scholarship competitions will impact a student's funding as outlined below. All cumulative scholarship values are assessed over the academic year (September to August):

- **Cumulative Awards up to \$2,500**
The student retains the full amount in addition to their base funding.
- **Cumulative Awards between \$2,500.01 and \$38,000**
The student receives the first \$2,500 in full. Of the remaining amount, 30% is added to the student's funding, and 70% is applied toward fulfilling their base funding requirement.
- **Cumulative Awards exceeding \$38,000**
No additional top-up is required from the supervisor, as the student's funding exceeds the base funding threshold.
- **Exceptions**
This policy does not apply where a scholarship's Terms of Reference (ToR) mandate a supervisor contribution.