Student Scholarships, Graduate Assistantships, & Tuition Waivers Policies

Scholarships and tuition waivers in the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work are intended for full-time students. Part-time students are ineligible for any scholarship, graduate assistantship, or tuition waiver. Unless otherwise specified by the associate dean of academic affairs, tuition waivers are intended for doctoral students receiving a graduate assistantship and are generally considered a part of the graduate assistantship award. Master’s students may be considered from those departments without doctoral programs. An exception is the Robert Walker Scholarship, which will be an award of the scholarship and tuition waiver until such time as tuition is included in the scholarship.

Managing scholarships and graduate assistantships

The associate dean of academic affairs manages all scholarships and graduate assistantships (GAs) in the College. With the College Finance Group the associate dean of academic affairs maintains a portfolio of scholarships with explanations of their purposes, eligibility criteria and stipulations upon award, amounts to be award annually, and stipulations on how the award is to be distributed, balances, and so forth.

The director of finance keeps records of all active scholarship accounts in the College. The College Finance Group will provide the College development officer with an account of scholarship funds for the coming academic year by December 20th. The development officer will report the College allocation of scholarship funds for the preceding year to University Advancement by January 5th. Available scholarship funding for the next academic year will be provided to the associate dean of academic affairs by February 1.

The associate dean of academic affairs will request department chairs/school to forward a list of available grant supported assistantships. The list of available assistantships will be a reasonable best estimate of grant funding for the next academic year.

The associate dean will present the information on scholarship funds to the College scholarship committee at a meeting during the first week of February. The committee will review the material provided by the director of finance and determine the number of scholarships to be awarded for the next academic year.

Graduate waivers will be forwarded by the associate dean of academic affairs to the department chairs/school director for verification by February 5. Verification must be received by the associate dean by close of business on February 15 or the business day closest to that date. The details of the GA process and the application will be available on the college web site. Students and program applicants will be informed of the posting by appropriate electronic media.

Posting and applying for scholarships and graduate assistantships

A call for applications for scholarships and assistantships will be posted on the College’s website. Students and applicants will also be notified of the posting of scholarships and assistantships by appropriate social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Postings will include information about the scholarship or graduate assistantship, eligibility criteria, required application materials, and the application deadlines. Assistantship applications must be received by the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs no later than March 15th. All other scholarship applications will also follow the published deadlines. Students will apply for scholarships and graduate assistantships electronically (when an electronic application is applicable), or will submit a paper copy of the application to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs. To be considered for scholarships or graduate assistantship, students must submit a complete and timely application. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
Generally, applications must include transcripts (if available), a CV explaining career to date including service, an essay describing future plans, and at least two letters of recommendation. Specific requirements will be posted on the college website to publicize the. For applicants, transcripts, essay, and recommendation letters can be those used to apply for admission to a program.

Reviewing and ranking applications for scholarships and Graduate assistantships

By the close of business on March 16th, or the following Monday if the 16th falls on a weekend, the assistant dean for student and alumni affairs will forward all timely and complete assistantship applications to the Departments. The Departments will review and allocate the graduate assistantships. The department will notify the associate dean of the recipients. The associate dean will notify the assistant dean. The Office of Student and Alumni Affairs will notify the recipients. All other scholarship applications will be reviewed by the College Scholarship Committee

The College scholarship committee will be composed of five faculty members. The assistant dean of student and alumni affairs will serve as a non-voting member. The preferable representatives of the faculty are the directors of the doctoral programs for each of the departments/school awarding doctoral degrees. The number of faculty members on the committee will expand to accommodate new doctoral programs as they are implemented. If a director of a doctoral program is unable to serve on the committee, the chair/director of the respective department/school will appoint an alternate DAS faculty to the committee.

The scholarship committee will review all applications for scholarships. Overall, review will be based on merit and the award criteria specific to a scholarship. Merit is defined as grade point average, satisfactory progress toward completion of a degree, if applicable, service to the College or University, the letters of recommendation, and the personal letter of the applicant. Service shall be construed as active volunteer service to organizations in the College or the University. In the case of applicants to a program, satisfactory progress toward a degree will be evaluated based on timeliness of completing the highest degree awarded. Service will be evaluated as service during the previous degree. Factors for evaluating applications should be weighted, with grade point average receiving the most weight, followed by satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree, service to the College or University, letters of recommendation, and personal letter.

The scholarship committee will score applications using a rubric. The rubric will rate undergraduate (if applicable) and graduate grade point average, progress toward completing a degree (or past degree(s) if appropriate), service, letters of recommendation, and the personal letter. The personal letter will be evaluated based on clarity and appropriateness of personal goals, grammar, and style.

Once applications have been evaluated and ranked by the committee, the committee will forward their applicant rankings to the associate dean of academic affairs. The associate dean will use the list of rank applicants to matched applicants and awards. The associate dean will notify the assistant dean of student and alumni affairs of the awardees. The assistant dean will in turn notify all applicants and their department/school chairs/director of the results.

The assistant dean of student and alumni affairs will send an electronic copy of an award letter to the applicant and the applicant’s department chair/school director. The letter will provide the details of the award, any conditions associated with accepting the award, and a request for the applicant’s signature signifying acceptance or rejection of the award. Applicant will have five business days to respond. If an applicant does not accept an award or fails to respond to the notice of award, the scholarship or graduate assistantship will be awarded to the next highest ranked applicant who meets criteria.

The assistant dean of student and alumni affairs will also notify by letter students who did not receive an award or assistantship. The Office of Student and Alumni Affairs will keep electronic copies of the applications, rubrics and award letters for five years.

Signed award letters will be forwarded to the director of finances. Copies will be forwarded to the department chairs/school director and the University Graduate School.

Procedures for creating Graduate Assistantship contracts

The names and Panther identification numbers of students selected to receive graduate assistantships will be provided to the Director of Finance. The College Finance Group will verify funding source. The College Finance Group will also verify tuition funding if the source of the funding is a grant. After University Graduate School notifies the College
that contracts can be written, students’ information, funding account information, terms, salary, etc. are entered into Panthersoft by the Office of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

After contracts are entered in Panthersoft, contracts are reviewed and approved by the director of finance and by University Graduate School.

The Office of Student and Alumni Affairs will inform students selected for an award of the procedures for awarding a scholarship or, in the case of a graduate assistantship, generating contracts/agreements.

In the case of graduate assistantship contracts/agreements, the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs will provide students with a copy of the agreement. The student will sign the agreement. Signed agreements will be counter signed by the student’s department chair/school director and, if the assistantship is funded by a grant or contract, by the grant principal investigator. The student will return the signed agreement to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, and the signed agreement will be forwarded to University Graduate School. Tuition waivers are credited to the student’s account once the student has registered for courses.

For assistantship awarded after University Graduate School’s deadline to generate contracts/agreements, a petition to University Graduate School is required from the department to generate a contract. The petition is on the Graduate School’s website. If the petition is approved, then the procedures above are followed.

Crediting students with scholarship and graduate assistantship funds

Once the director of finances has received award letters, the College Finance Group will prepare a request to University financial aid to transfer funds from the College account, if it is a scholarship, to the student’s account. The financial group will inform the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs of the transfer and the Office will verify that the funds have been transferred.

In the case of graduate assistantships, the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs will forwarded completed agreements to the University Graduate School and notify the Office of Academic Affairs. University Graduate School will transfer funds to the student’s account.
Procedures for Awarding Scholarships and Graduate Assistantships

1. List of Scholarships & Assistantships
2. College Development Officer Available scholarship funding
3. University Advancement
4. Anticipated funded assistantships Chairs/Director
5. Available scholarship/assistantship funding to ADAA
6. Call for applications posted Office of Student & Alumni Affairs
7. Applications forwarded to the ADAA
8. Applications reviewed by Scholarship Committee
9. Awards assigned by the ADAA
10. List of ranked applicants forwarded to the ADAA
Office of Student & Alumni Affairs notifies award winners and chairs/director

Scholarships Awarded

Assistantship Agreements to the students

Assistantship Agreements to Chairs/Direct

Assistantship Agreements to Office of Student & Alumni Affairs

Assistantship Agreements to UGS