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How much is the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) annual stipend?  
The GRFP stipend is currently $34,000 for a 12-month tenure period, prorated monthly at $2,833.33 ($2,833.34 every 3rd month). You will receive monthly payments to your BAR account during the academic year beginning in October. Your summer stipends will begin to be paid to your BAR account the end of June. Note: If you have any outstanding charges on your account (e.g., instructional enhancement charges, Ashe Center charges, library fines), those charges will be paid first before your stipend is paid out.

You are strongly encouraged to establish a Bruin Direct account (www.grad.ucla.edu/gss/library/bdintro.htm), which will receive your funds electronically and quicker than if you do not have a Bruin Direct account (the alternative is snail mail to the address on file with the Registrar’s Office). The Bruin Direct account disburses fellowship and financial aid payments; it is not connected to payroll. Thus, if you have direct deposit for your salary payments, you would need to set up Bruin Direct separately.

Your graduate fellowship also comes with an institutional allowance (aka cost-of-education allowance) of $12,000. This institutional allowance is automatically applied to graduate tuition/fees. Your school/department/program and the Graduate Division will split (50–50) the difference between the institutional allowance and actual tuition/fees, including professional school supplemental tuition and non-resident supplemental tuition (NRST). By accepting the NSF GRFP, UCLA promises not to charge students for the difference between the cost of education allowance provided and the graduate fees and tuition currently in place. The department may not pay the student a stipend and request for the student to pay the balance of fees from the awarded stipend. Note that the departmental payment could vary if the awardee receives an appointment as an academic apprentice.

How many years of graduate support do I get?  
All awards are for a maximum of three years usable over a five-year period while in graduate school (i.e., two years may be put on reserve at any time during the five-year period). If you finish your three years of funding before the five-year period is up, put the last two years On Reserve. Doing so will enable you to take advantage of supplemental programs that NSF might make available to active Fellows (e.g., the Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide [GROW], GROW with USAID, Graduate Research Internship Program [GRIP]).

How much money goes towards my graduate tuition and fees?  
The money that goes toward your graduate tuition and fees is known as the cost-of-education allowance. Currently, $12,000 per tenure year goes toward your tuition and fees. The University, not the Fellow, is responsible for paying any balance of fees/tuition. See the next Question and Answer.

After the cost of education allowance is applied to my graduate tuition and fees, who pays the remaining balance on my BAR account?  
The University, not the Fellow, is responsible for paying any balance of fees/tuition. Your graduate standard fees are covered, as is NRST for your first year only, up to the maximum amount of the cost-of-education allowance. As of 2014–15, your school/department/program and the Graduate Division will split the difference (50–50) between the cost-of-education allowance and actual tuition/fees, including professional school supplemental tuition and NRST (if applicable). The department may not pay the student a stipend and request for the student to pay the balance of fees from the awarded stipend. Note that the departmental payment could vary if the awardee receives an appointment as an academic apprentice.
How are my graduate fees paid?
Student Accounting will know that you are receiving an extramural fellowship that pays your graduate tuition/fees. You do not have to do anything nor submit any additional documentation. As long as you declare tenure on FastLane for the upcoming academic year by May 1, Fellowships & Financial Services will be notified regarding your tuition/fees. The latter will be paid automatically.

As described in the next Q&A, your January stipend payment will be made in early January, after tuition/fees are due. However, you will not be assessed any late charges, because the system knows you are receiving a graduate tuition/fee payment fellowship.

How is the stipend disbursed to graduate Fellows?
If you have set up a Bruin Direct account (www.grad.ucla.edu/gss/library/bdintro.htm), your money will be wired to your account. Note: If you have any outstanding charges on your account (e.g., instructional enhancement charges, Ashe Center charges, library fines), those charges will be paid first before your stipend is paid out.

You are strongly encouraged to establish a Bruin Direct account, which will receive your funds electronically and quicker than if you do not have a Bruin Direct account (the alternative is snail mail to the address on file with the Registrar’s Office). The Bruin Direct account disburses fellowship and financial aid payments; it is not connected to payroll. Thus, if you have direct deposit for your salary payments, you would need to set up Bruin Direct separately.

Your summer payment will be paid monthly toward the end of June or early July. The academic-year payments will be made monthly, October through June. You will receive the monthly payments toward the end of the preceding month. For example, your October payment will be made in late September. Your January payment will be an exception to this disbursement: That payment will be made in early January.

I didn't receive my full graduate NSF GRFP stipend. Why not?
Check your My.UCLA.edu account to see if you have other charges on your bill. If so, those charges were paid before the stipend was disbursed to you. If not, perhaps the stipend went toward your tuition/fees. This should not happen. Please contact us (see the next Question).

Whom do I contact if I have a question about the disbursement of my graduate funding payments?
The Fellowships & Financial Services Office, 1228 Murphy Hall, 310-825-1025, gdsupport@grad.ucla.edu.

What is the GRFP activities report, and when is it due?
Each year, irrespective of Fellow’s status, you must submit online at FastLane (https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/index.jsp) a brief report (1 page) summarizing your accomplishments and experiences during the past year of graduate study. These reports are due before declaring tenure for the next year. Please include information relevant to your graduate research or coursework, such as papers, exhibitions, publications, conferences, etc. It is important to fill this out because NSF uses this to determine the success of the program, and consequently, to obtain future funding. Your faculty mentor must sign into FastLane to approve your activities report. Your mentor’s approval must be submitted so you can declare tenure by May 1.

Can I apply for additional graduate NSF funding?
The fellowship does not provide allowances for special student needs, such as research expenses, travel to scientific conferences, travel to employment sites, computers, books and publications, fieldwork expenses, special study, and the like except as described in answer 16. Fellows may request support from other sources such as NSF’s Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities Program, the Nordic Research Opportunity, the Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide (GROW), GROW with USAID and Graduate Research Internship Program (GRIP).

NSF GRFP awards cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with another US Government Federal Fellowship, irrespective of the Fellow’s Tenure Status.
How do I renew my graduate fellowship for next year?
By May 1, you must submit online at FastLane (https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/index.jsp) a Declaration to Utilize, Reserve or Terminate a Subsequent Year of a 3-year Graduate Fellowship Award for the purpose of declaring whether you will utilize or reserve your fellowship for the following year. All Fellows, even those on reserve, MUST submit this form via the Graduate Fellowship Administration System on FastLane each year. Failure to declare your intent at this time results in your fellowship being considered as terminated. Terminated fellowships will not be reinstated.

How do I transfer my graduate fellowship to another institution?
If you wish to transfer from one graduate institution to another during a fellowship year, you must submit online at FastLane (https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/index.jsp) a Tenure Change request to NSF (which must be verified by the Coordinating Official in 1228 Murphy Hall) as well as evidence of acceptance to the new institution.

How do I get approved for part-time work while on the GRFP?
Fellows may engage in employment related to academic activity (e.g., GSR and TA appointments). Per Graduate Division’s policy, the standard allowable appointment percentage is at 25%, or 10 hours per week. **Appointments over 25% are not encouraged and exceptions to work over 25% time are generally not approved by the Graduate Division.**

Can I have another graduate fellowship while I have the NSF?
It depends upon the source of the other fellowship and the maximum stipend limit set by the Graduate Division. NSF does not allow Fellows to concurrently accept federal funding, but exceptions include: Veteran Benefits, ROTC Training Allowance, and Fulbright U.S. Student Program Study/Research Abroad Grants.

For the Graduate Division maximum stipend limit, ask your department Student Affairs Officer/Staff Graduate Advisor to contact the workgroup representative for your department in the Fellowships & Financial Services Office, 1228 Murphy Hall.

Must I refund the graduate fellowship if I withdraw from school without completing my course of study?
No. But no further funding will be distributed after you end your enrollment.

Is the NSF GRFP fellowship subject to Federal income tax?
You bear the responsibility of paying any tax, domestic or foreign, if due. Additionally, you are responsible for filing all proper tax forms when there is a tax liability. See IRS Publications 970 and 505 at http://www.irs.gov.


Can I go abroad? Will my graduate fellowship fund my trip?
NSF encourages Fellows to apply for other NSF opportunities announced through “Dear Colleague” emails. One such opportunity is the Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide (GROW), which provides $5,000 from NSF and living expenses from an organization in the host country.

What is our NSF GRFP grant number?
During the period 2011–2017, the number is DGE-1144087. (UCLA received a no-cost extension for the 2016–17 year.)

Where can I find more information on my responsibilities as a current NSF Graduate Fellow?
Additional information may be obtained in the Administrative Guide for Fellows & Coordinating Officials.