

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, 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 upon approval by the Associate Dean Research, Graduate Programs, FoMD.

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 department, faculty, and university competitions.
- GTA and GRA income over \$2,000 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 \$2,000 of GTA and GRA income.
- Travel awards obtained from the department, faculty, and/or university.

- Research Prizes (e.g., 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. 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 external and internal scholarship competitions will affect the student's funding as follows:

- **\$0-\$2,000:** The student shall keep the entire amount in addition to their base funding.
- **\$2,001-\$5,000 (cumulative awards):** The award goes towards base funding, and the student receives a minimum \$2,500 top-up.
- **\$5,001-\$10,000 (cumulative awards):** The award goes towards base funding, and the student receives a minimum \$3,000 top-up.
- **\$10,001-\$15,000 (cumulative awards):** The award goes towards base funding, and the student receives a minimum \$3,500 top-up.
- **\$15,001-\$21,000 (cumulative awards):** The award goes towards base funding, and the student receives a minimum \$4,000 top-up.
- **\$21,001-\$40,000 (cumulative awards):** The award goes towards base funding, and the student receives a minimum \$5,000 top-up.
- **Greater than \$40,001 (cumulative awards):** Top-up funding is not mandatory and is left to the supervisor's discretion.
- **Exceptions:** Terms of Reference (ToR) for specific scholarships where there is mandatory contribution from the supervisor and funding from a First Nations, Metis, or Inuit organization.