

FINANCIAL AID FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The following information was originally an integral part of the Guide for Graduate Students

The Department of History has three types of financial aid: graduate assistantships, graduate fellowships, and various prizes and awards.

The university and the Graduate School also give a number of awards to graduate students. See http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/ga_awards_fellowships/gainfo.php for a description of these. You can apply for some of them yourself; others need a nomination from a faculty member.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The department offers a limited number of graduate assistantships, divided into grading and teaching assistantships. M.A. students normally apply for grading assistantships and Ph.D. students for teaching assistantships. Renewal of assistantships is normal, but it is not guaranteed. In addition to the department and university budget, it depends on academic performance and the fulfillment of the assistantship duties. We require no lower than a 3.25 GPA for the first renewal and no lower than a 3.5 for the second. Anyone applying for an assistantship who is already in the program will have to meet this requirement at the time of application. No one may hold an assistantship for more than five years (seven years for a Ph.D. student who had an assistantship for two or more years as a M.A. student at The University of Memphis). The normal assistantship period for M.A. students is two years, which is rarely if ever extended, and only for a compelling reason. You must apply for an assistantship (get the application at <http://www.memphis.edu/history/pdfs/assistap.pdf>) by January 15.

At present grading assistantships pay \$7300 per academic year, plus all tuition and fees; teaching assistantships pay \$8600, plus tuition and fees. In addition, in the recent past we have been able to offer an additional stipend to many assistants because most assistants are eligible for government financial aid (not a loan, but pay for work as a graduate assistant). To make this possible, we strongly encourage all potential assistants who are U.S. citizens or holders of green cards to submit an application for federal financial aid at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

Time is of the essence in obtaining this government money, since the Graduate School will stop awarding work-study money when its budget is exhausted. This may happen even if the government tells you are eligible for such aid. The first week day in January is the first day you can file, and you should do as soon after January 1 as possible. While you will have to know your basic income for the previous year to file, you do not have to have all the exact financial information needed for filing income tax, or even have your W-2 form, since you can revise your application when new information becomes available. Waiting to get it all may make your application too late. You must indicate that you are interested in college work-study funds (you will not have to do any additional work for this).

Please e-mail the Graduate Coordinator (currently Dr. [Daniel Unowsky](#)) as soon as you apply, and as soon as you get notification of eligibility or non-eligibility for FAFSA college work study, please send the Graduate Coordinator a copy of your financial aid eligibility letter. You do not

have to provide us any financial information that you want to remain confidential; the eligibility letter merely tells you what financial aid you are eligible for.

This is very important for our graduate assistants, and we urge you to do it, although we know it is annoying to have to take this trouble when you don't even know if you will have an assistantship or not.

Normally, grading assistants assist a professor in a large lecture section, attend the professor's lectures, grade examinations and papers, lead discussion sections, and consult with students. Teaching assistants normally grade for the first year that they have an assistantship and then teach one class the first semester of the second year, an online course if possible. After that the normal assignment is to teach two sections of World History (History 1110 or 1120) or U.S. History (History 2010 or 2020) per semester. However, we are increasingly asking teaching assistants to grade after the first year, because we believe that doing so will leave much more time for their work. We normally give priority in this to three kinds of teaching assistants: those studying for comps, those near the end of the dissertation, and those requesting it. We may also ask some assistants to teach off-campus classes. In addition, assistants are often asked to assist in Department of History activities like History Day. Instead of their normal duties, we may ask either kind of assistant to assist a professor or the department in research or other activities or lead discussion sections.

You must have an M.A. before you can be a teaching assistant; M.A. students may apply only for a grading assistantship.

All new assistants, whether grading or teaching assistants, must take History 7020/8020, Seminar for Teaching Assistants as soon as possible, optimally in the first semester.

GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Ruth and Harry Woodbury Fellowship in Southern History: Currently valued at \$2,000, although it varies depending on the earnings of the departmental endowment, this fellowship is annually awarded to a doctoral student with research interests in the history of the American South. By the terms of the endowment a committee consisting of Dr. Crawford and Dr. Chumney chooses the recipient.

Dissertation Fellowships: In recent years the department has provided two fellowships to support doctoral students writing their dissertations. Depending on budget, these may not be available every year, and some years we may offer more.

The first fellowship is for assistants only and provides a semester free of duties with no reduction in pay to a student at an intermediate stage of the dissertation who is expected to complete a chapter during the fellowship period.

The second fellowship is for a year and open to all ABD's, who expect to finish their dissertation during the fellowship year. Currently it pays \$15,000 for the fellowship period.

We announce these fellowships during the spring semester and the Graduate Studies Committee evaluates the applications.

The **Dr. Peggy Jemison Bodine Dissertation Fellowship** is an annual award given to a doctoral student writing the dissertation. This award varies with the earnings of the endowment, but is

currently \$1,500. By the terms of the endowment the chair chooses the recipient, with input from the Graduate Coordinator.

The **Dr. William R. and Helen Lucille Gillaspie Scholarship** was established by the Gillaspies' two sons, Greg and Glenn, in memory of their father and mother. The award goes to a meritorious graduate student who either majors or minors in Latin American history, a subject Dr. Gillaspie taught for 37 years. At present Dr. James Blythe, Dr. Guiomar Dueñas-Vargas, and Dr. Janann Sherman constitute the committee to determine the recipient.

OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Dissertation Research Grant: Students who are ABD may apply to the department's Endowments Committee to request funding for research and travel that is specifically related to completing the dissertation. Previous grants have assisted in funding trips to various archives such as the Southern Historical Collection, Duke University, Library of Congress, and London.

Major L. Wilson Graduate Paper Prize: Annually given for the best paper written in a department graduate course, this honor includes a monetary award, currently \$100.

Best History Teaching Assistant Award: Annually given to a teaching assistant for outstanding teaching, this honor includes a monetary award, currently \$300. A committee of the Graduate and Undergraduate Coordinators, the Endowments Committee chair, and the coordinator of adjunct teaching selects the recipient after consultation with the TA mentors. This committee also chooses an outstanding part-time teacher, who also gets a monetary award of the same amount.

Best Thesis and Best Dissertation Awards: Given every two years, each of these honors includes a monetary award. We will only award this to what we consider to be outstanding theses or dissertations. The Graduate Studies Committee awards this after consultation with all directors of recent theses and dissertations. Currently the award is \$250 for a M.A. thesis and \$500 for a Ph.D. dissertation.