

USM Graduate Student Guide to Financial Support



Overview

Graduate students at the University of Southern Maine finance their education through a variety of ways including employer tuition support, scholarships, veteran's benefits, federal financial aid, and university assistance. This is a guide to financial support provided by the Office of Graduate Studies at USM and other important sources.

Eligibility

Graduate students receiving financial support from federal or university resources must be matriculated in a graduate program at USM and *enrolled in at least six graduate credits (500 level or above)* in each semester that the award is utilized. You must be offered admission to a USM graduate program before an offer of support can be made to you and you must be matriculated before the support is distributed. These eligibility requirements apply to all of the financial resources discussed in this guide.

Federal Financial Aid

Graduate students are eligible to apply for federal financial aid by completing the FAFSA form on the government website: www.fafsa.ed.gov. Graduate students may receive loans (no grants) through federal financial aid. Approximately twenty-five graduate students are also awarded work-study funds each year at USM. When you receive your financial aid award notification from USM, note the number of credits used to calculate your funding. Report any discrepancy between your planned enrollment and the number of credits used to estimate your award to the financial aid office. You must also inform financial aid of any scholarships and tuition assistance that you will receive from USM or outside sources. Prospective and returning students should file their FAFSA form by February 15th to meet USM's priority deadline of March 1st.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships are funded by resources from the Office of Graduate Studies, academic departments, grants, contracts, and non-academic departments. Academic programs select new and continuing students to fill positions through their established application process. Other funders may hire graduate assistants through their own selection methods or with the assistance of the Office of Graduate Studies. Graduate assistants may be hired to perform research, assist with teaching, or engage in other meaningful work that supports their scholarly work. Final selections are submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies which initiates the formal hiring process. For more information, visit: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/grad/graduateassistantship.html>

Graduate Recruitment and Trustee Tuition Scholarships

The Office of Graduate Studies solicits nominations from graduate programs for Graduate Recruitment and Trustee Scholarships each year. Graduate faculty members are asked to nominate outstanding first-time students for the two-year, eighteen-credit, Recruitment Tuition Scholarships. Graduate faculty are also asked to recommend first-time *or returning students* for the variable-year and flexible credit Trustee Tuition Scholarships. Students must accept these awards by April 15 or the funds will be retracted and redistributed to other students.



Graduate Lunder Scholarships

Contingent upon annual available funding, the Office of Graduate Studies typically awards four or five new Lunder Scholarships each year. Lunder Scholarships are available to both new and returning USM graduate students. First preference for this scholarship is made for former employees or children of former employees of the Dexter Shoe Company; however, any Maine resident is eligible to apply. The award decisions are based on student financial need as described by the applicant. The scholarship is currently an award of \$2,500 per academic year (\$1,250 per semester) for up to four years. The application for this scholarship is available on the Office of Graduate Studies Financial Support website.

OGS Undergraduate Teaching Assistantships

In addition to the teaching assistants hired through academic departments as GA's, the Office of Graduate Studies facilitates the process for hiring six, one-semester TA's to support undergraduate education. The available positions are determined by April of each year for the following fall semester. You can learn more and apply for a TA position by visiting the USM Graduate Studies Financial Support website.



Important Dates/Deadlines for Students

January – Feb 15	File FAFSA Form
March	Compare financial award credit estimate with actual academic plan for fall.
Variable	Apply to program for graduate assistantships and scholarships.
April 15	Deadline for accepting offers of OGS Recruitment and Trustee Scholarships.
April	Apply for Lunder Scholarship through the Office of Graduate Studies.
April	Apply for undergraduate teaching assistantship through the Office of Graduate Studies.

USM Graduate Student Support At-A-Glance

Type of Graduate Student Support	Source of Funding	Eligible Student Status	How to Apply
Graduate Assistantships	OGS through programs	New or Continuing	Contact graduate program
Graduate Assistantships	Program or Department	New or Continuing	Contact graduate program
Graduate Assistantships	Non-Academic Departments	New or Continuing	Office of Graduate Studies
Federal Financial Aid	U.S. Government and USM	New or Continuing	FAFSA Website
Graduate Aide (Work-Study)	U.S. Government and USM	New or Continuing	FAFSA Website
Graduate Recruitment Scholarships	Office of Graduate Studies	New	Faculty Nomination
Graduate Trustee Scholarships	Office of Graduate Studies	New or Continuing	Faculty Nomination
USM Teaching Assistantships	Office of Graduate Studies	New or Continuing	Office of Graduate Studies
Lunder Scholarships	Office of Graduate Studies	New or Continuing	Office of Graduate Studies
Program Specific Scholarships	Program or Department	New or Continuing	Contact graduate program

Questions?

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Office of Graduate Studies Financial Support Website: www.usm.maine.edu/grad/financial.html