

Office of the Provost



Minimum graduate student stipends are being raised, effective immediately

August 31, 2023

Graduate assistants and associates are vital members of our campus community. To support them, we are raising the minimum stipend for graduate assistants and associates, effective immediately. Our goal is to better align our minimum stipends with the living expenses presented in the university's estimated graduate student budget.

The new minimum stipends represent approximately \$5.7 million of immediate investment in our graduate students.

- \$19,401 will be the new minimum stipend for all nine-month, 50 percent graduate assistants, graduate teaching assistants, graduate teaching associates, graduate research assistants, and graduate research associates. This is a \$2,121 increase over the current highest minimum stipend for a nine-month position.
- \$25,868 will be the new minimum stipend for all 12-month, 50 percent graduate assistants, graduate teaching assistants, graduate teaching associates, graduate research assistants, and graduate research associates. This is a \$4,268 increase over the current highest minimum stipend for a 12-month position.

The increases will be retroactive to August 1, 2023. As many of you know, 50 percent (or 20 hours a week) is considered full time for graduate assistants to ensure they have time for their own academic work. Minimum stipends will be prorated for positions that are less than 50 percent time (<https://budget.utk.edu/graduate-stipends-2023/>).

Graduate students whose stipends are below the new minimums will receive increases. Colleges and administrative units will notify students who will receive increases and start the processes to add to their pay. Students who receive increases will see the new amounts in their paychecks at the end of September.

Looking ahead

The new minimums move us more than halfway to our goal of establishing minimum stipends that align with living expenses in the university's estimated graduate student budget. Plans are already underway to go further in the next fiscal year, starting July 1, 2024.

Moving forward, we will establish a practice of regularly reviewing alignment of our stipends with the estimated living expenses for graduate students.

In addition to raising minimum stipends, we are simplifying the minimums by establishing a single minimum for nine-month positions and one for 12-month positions, regardless of the level of appointment. Colleges and administrative units are encouraged to distinguish among the levels by building on the minimums.

Today's actions are the result of extensive study by our colleges and administrative areas and engagement with Graduate Student Senate leadership. These conversations will continue as we work together to show that UT is a place that values graduate students and their importance to our academic mission, community, and strategic vision.

Donde Plowman

Chancellor

John Zomchick

Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor

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[QEP Topic Area Identified](#)

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[SACSCOC Accreditation](#)

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