SEAS Ph.D. Financial Aid and Funding Policies AY15-16

Note this document discusses the funding model for Ph.D. students only. It discusses financial policies and only mentions relevant academic policies when needed; detailed academic policies are discussed in the “Policies of the Committee on Higher Degrees” document.

SEAS Ph.D. funding model
The SEAS Ph.D. funding model is comprised of a variety of sources of support: SEAS support from School funds, advisor support from grants, contracts or other sources, and teaching fellowships. Some students may also have external awards that provide some or all of their support. Below is an explanation of the funding model for the “typical” Ph.D. SEAS student.

G1 year (September – May): SEAS funds both the tuition/fees and the 9 month stipend.

G1 summer (June and July): Student works for a faculty member advisor as a research assistant (RA) and earns an RA salary paid by the advisor.

G2 (August – May): Each Ph.D. student is required to teach one semester during the G2 year in a quarter-time (0.25 FTE, approx. 10-12 hours per week) appointment for a SEAS course or an FAS course taught by a SEAS faculty member.

- In the semester in which the G2 is a TF at 0.25 FTE, the student also remains an RA for their advisor (at a reduced effort level); salary and tuition/fees are paid for by a combination of SEAS and advisor.
- In the semester in which the G2 is not a TF, the student works for a faculty member advisor as a research assistant (RA); the RA salary is paid by the advisor and tuition/fees is paid by SEAS.

Note that for both semesters, the monthly salary is the same (i.e. due to effort levels, when a G2 student is a TF, the RA salary is reduced by the TF salary such that the take-home salary remains the same).

G2 summer (June and July): The student works for a faculty member advisor as a research assistant (RA) and earns an RA salary paid by the advisor.

G3 and beyond (August – May): The advisor fully supports the student and pays both the monthly RA salary as well as any tuition/fees. This includes summer support.

Students with advisors outside of SEAS (this information, with further details, is also in the CHD document)
For students who cannot find a SEAS advisor and decide to have a non-SEAS advisor (in FAS, other Harvard schools, MIT, etc.), that advisor is responsible to cover all salary and tuition/fees from G2 year onward. Students must still meet the TF requirement in the G2 year. Students considering this should speak with the Office of Academic Programs to ensure policy communication is made with the non-SEAS advisor. If a student has an advisor outside of SEAS, a SEAS co-advisor is required.

Students who are in-between advisors (this information is also in the CHD document)
Students who are in-between advisors have the length of one full term to identify a new advisor. Students are expected to find external funding or to serve as TF at a half-time (0.5 FTE) appointment for their funding in the Fall or Spring terms. The TF covers the monthly salary and all tuition/fees. The monthly salary is equal to the RA salary. There are not TF opportunities over the summer and SEAS does not provide summer funding. Note that a student must be in good standing in order to qualify to serve as a TF and receive funding. Students who cannot identify a new advisor at the end of one full term will be asked to withdraw from the program based on a lack of progress to degree.

SEAS teaching requirement (this information is also in the CHD document)
All students entering the Ph.D. Program as of Fall 2013 will be required to TF at quarter time (0.25 FTE) for at least one term for a SEAS course or an FAS course taught by a SEAS faculty member. This requirement must be met
during the student’s G2 year. In exceptional cases, a research advisor may request a deferral of the TF requirement until the G3 year, but there are financial implications for the advisor that must be agreed upon in advance before a deferral is approved.

Employment policies (this information is also in the CHD document)
SEAS policy is that no full-time student may accept employment other than Teaching Fellowships and Research Assistantships during the academic year, either inside or outside the University, which involves a time commitment of more than ten hours per week without the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). No restrictions apply to employment during the Summer Period, except that employment as a full-time Research Assistant precludes other employment. Ph.D. candidates who have passed their qualifying examinations may not be granted part-time status for the purpose of accepting employment without the permission of the DGS.

SEAS Additional Compensation
1. TF bonus
Given to eligible SEAS Ph.D. students who teach beyond the School’s TF requirement. Ph.D. students will receive a bonus of $1,500 ($1,500 above the regular RA salary) per term if they meet the following criteria:
1) They have previously met the 0.25 FTE teaching requirement
2) They are teaching at a 0.25 FTE or above
3) They are teaching a SEAS course OR an FAS course taught by a SEAS ladder faculty member
4) They are a G5 or below.

Exclusions: PhD students will not be eligible for the bonus if:
1) They are a G6 or above and/or
2) They have an external fellowship that pays them in addition to the TF salary they are paid and/or
3) They are teaching for their monthly support.

Note: Students with a 0.125 FTE appointment will be paid half the bonus. Students with a greater than a 0.25 FTE appointment will have the bonus capped at a maximum of $1,500. The bonus does not apply to master's students or non-SEAS PhD students. The bonus is paid at the end of the term in which the student qualifies and is reported as part of the student’s income on their W-2 form.

2. Open External Competitive Fellowship Award*
Given to students who are awarded an open, external to Harvard, competitive fellowship while at SEAS. Students who bring in open external competitive external fellowships (such as the NSF, NDSEG, or HHMI fellowships) that are equal to 50% or more of their total support (tuition/fees + stipend or salary) will receive a supplemental award of $3,000 in the first year of the external fellowship. Recipients of partial external fellowships (e.g., NSERC) made on the basis of open competition receive a supplemental award of $1,000 in the first year of the award. Students must apply for the award through the Office of Academic Programs. The award is normally paid at the end of the first term in which the student holds the fellowship. A 1099-MISC tax form will be issued to be filed with the students’ taxes. *Note: This policy is effective as of Fall 2013. Students who entered SEAS before Fall 2013 are grandfathered under the former policies governing the open competitive fellowship award.

AY 15-16 Rates of Tuition and Fees (in this document, the term tuition/fees refers to the following)
Full tuition -- $41,832 (G1 & G2)
Reduced tuition -- $10,876 (G3 & G4)
Facilities fee -- $2,678 (G5 and beyond)
BC/BS fee -- $2,390 (G1 and beyond)
UHS fee -- $1,042 (G1 and beyond)
Stipend/RA salary: $2,850 a month (for AY15-16; this rate may be changed as of July 1, 2016)