

**Graduate Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)**Topic: Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF) AdministrationDocument #: GR-SOP-Finance-01

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF) is a competitive award program administered by the Graduate School that covers the cost of in-state tuition and mandatory fees for qualified Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), and Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) students. GTF funding supports the strategic priorities of the University of Houston in the following ways:
1. GTF funding for Ph.D. students is in line with the national best practices among the comprehensive research-intensive universities, where recruitment and retention of high quality Ph.D. students is essential for the vitality of both research and educational missions. Furthermore, Ph.D. production is among the many key quality metrics and rankings including the Top American Research University (TARU) classification.
  2. GTF funding for DMA and MFA students is in line with the national best practices
  3. Among the comprehensive research-intensive universities, where recruitment and retention of high quality DMA and MFA students is essential for the vitality of both scholarly and educational missions. The investment into DMA and MFA programs is in line with the University of Houston commitment to the Arts and Humanities.
- Note: *Non-resident graduate students may be eligible for either non-resident tuition employment waivers per [MAPP 11.03.03](#), or for academic competitive scholarship waivers.*
- B. Requests for non-GTF tuition support for all other graduate students will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Such requests will only be considered if aligned with the strategic priorities of the University. *For example, certain masters-only programs may request non-GTF tuition support in cases where the recruitment of highly qualified graduate teaching assistants, essential for undergraduate student success, would otherwise not be possible.*
- C. Students who have a Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF) are not eligible to receive the Graduate School Fund (GSF).
- D. If students awarded GTF are also eligible for Hazelwood benefits, the Graduate School will contact the student to confirm that the student wants to use the Hazelwood benefit. If the student decides to use the Hazelwood benefit, the Graduate School will adjust the GTF amount to cover the amount of tuition and mandatory fees that the Hazelwood benefit does not cover.
- E. The eligibility criteria discussed in Sections II and III are the minimum eligibility criteria as set by the Graduate School. Individual colleges and programs may impose additional eligibility criteria based on availability of funds and strategic priorities. View the respective [College GTF Policies](#) for additional information.

## II. ELIGIBILITY (Academic)

- A. Possess an undergraduate degree or its equivalent and be admitted to a Ph.D., DMA, or MFA degree program.

- B. Register for a minimum of nine (9) credit hours during an academic term (fall and spring).
1. Requests for an exception from the minimum enrollment requirement will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. These exceptions must be requested through a [Graduate & Professional Student Petition](#).
    - a. As a one-time exception, a reduced course load (less than full-time enrollment) is typically allowed due to an expected graduation in the last term of a program. No petition is required for this exception, the student must demonstrate they will graduate in this term by submitting an [application to graduate](#). For more information on graduation, please see the [Graduate Catalog](#).
- C. Minimum academic standing requirements:
1. Begin the respective PhD, DMA, or MFA program with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.00.
  2. Maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00.
    - a. Requests for an exception from the minimum GPA requirements will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis *only* for students entering their second long term (fall or spring). These exceptions must be requested through a [Graduate & Professional Student Petition](#).
  3. Demonstrate satisfactory progress in course work, and timely progress in completing the degree requirements as defined by the enrolling graduate program.
 

Note: Degree requirements include course work, degree specific examinations, and thesis/dissertation research.
- D. Students entering a PhD, DMA, or MFA program directly from a baccalaureate program or with a Master's degree that is outside of the academic discipline to be pursued at the UH qualify for up to twelve (12) semesters of GTF funding.
- a. Requests for an exception from this requirement must be requested through a [Graduate & Professional Student Petition](#) and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis
- E. Students entering the University of Houston with a Master's degree that is in the same academic field as the PhD, DMA, or MFA program qualify for up to eight (8) semesters of GTF funding.
- a. Requests for an exception from this requirement must be requested through a [Graduate & Professional Student Petition](#) and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis
- III. ELIGIBILITY (Employment)
- A. Employment is not required to be considered for a GTF award; however, individual colleges and programs may impose employment as one of the eligibility criterion (see section I.C).
  - B. ALL students holding a title of Research Assistant/TE (Tuition Eligible) will receive GTF awards as long as they meet Academic Eligibility Criteria detailed in Section II.
  - C. Research Assistants who are not employed as "Research Assistant/TE" are NOT eligible for the GTF award.
  - D. All GTF awardees employed in an assistantship position must complete the annual university mandatory training. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the cancellation of the GTF award.

- E. Graduate students employed in an on campus assistantship position holding the GTF may not engage in on-campus employment for more than twenty (20) hours per week (50% of Full-Time Equivalent [FTE]). Any violation of this provision without prior approval by the Dean of the Graduate School will result in withdrawal of the funding during the term in which the violation occurs by the student.

- 1. Requests for an exception from this provision will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. These exceptions must be requested through an [Overload Request Form](#).

EXCEPTION: Approval is not required to work additional hours when class is not officially in session and/or during term breaks and holidays.

#### IV. ADMINISTRATION

- A. Colleges will receive an allocation of GTF funds for the following fiscal year. The allocated dollar amount will define the number of GTF the college can award based on the [tuition rates](#) and [mandatory fees](#).
- B. Colleges may choose to add additional criteria for awarding GTF funds to graduate students. Such college-specific criteria must be provided to the Graduate School annually and adopted by the college committee making GTF decisions. The Graduate School will publish all criteria to the [Graduate Funding website](#).
- C. Selection of GTF awardees must be made by a respective scholarship committee in the college, in which the student is enrolled in a Ph.D., DMA, or MFA degree program according to clearly defined criteria consistent with a cumulative 3.00 GPA, academic standing in general, and full-time enrollment.
- D. Any waiver or exception from the GTF eligibility guidelines must be requested using the [Graduate & Professional Students Petition](#) (“Other” category) with a memo attached providing justification for the exception. Such requests require approval from the Dean of the Graduate School.
- E. Nominations of students for GTF must be sent to the Graduate School from the college in [SharePoint](#). This information must be received by the Graduate School by the deadlines indicated in the term’s priority and final deadline emails sent from the Graduate School. Access to the GTF SharePoint site must be requested from the Associate Director of the Graduate School via email.
- F. The Graduate School will send compiled award memos to the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (SFA) for GTF posting to students’ accounts within two weeks of the receipt of the nominations from the colleges.
- G. The Graduate School will audit the academic, billing, and human resources records to verify the enrollment hours, GPA, program, GTF amount, RA-TE eligibility, and in-state tuition waivers for each student. The Graduate School will notify the GTF student’s college of any student rejections due to non-compliance.
- H. If the GTF awardee makes any changes in enrollment after SFA disburses the GTF funds, the college/program is responsible for ensuring the student’s compliance with the GTF requirements.
- I. If a student with a non-resident employment waiver per [MAPP 11.03.03](#) has to leave UH before the last day of classes for the term, in-state tuition waivers can be requested using the academic competitive scholarship waiver, provided that the student has completed all degree requirements and remains eligible to receive GTF in the term of the waiver request.
  - a. These exceptions must be requested on a [Graduate and Professional Student Petition](#) and signed by the Graduate School Dean before the student leaves UH.

The Graduate School will submit a waiver request to SFA to ensure that the student is not billed non-resident tuition.

## V. DOCUMENTATION

- A. [MAPP 11.03.03 – Non-Resident Tuition Employment Waivers](#)
- B. College GTF Policies/Graduate Funding Website: <http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/graduate-funding/>
- C. [Graduate & Professional Student Petition](#)
- D. Application to Graduate Website: [www.accessuh.uh.edu](http://www.accessuh.uh.edu)
- E. [Graduate Catalog](#)
- F. [Overload Request Form](#)
- G. Current Tuition Rates Website: <http://www.uh.edu/financial/graduate/tuition-fees/>
- H. Current Mandatory/Required Fees Website: <http://www.uh.edu/financial/graduate/tuition-fees/required-fees/>
- I. GTF SharePoint Website: <https://uofh.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-school/Lists/GTF/Incomplete.aspx?viewpath=%2Fsites%2Fgraduate-school%2FLists%2FGTF%2FIncomplete.aspx>

## VI. APPROVAL

Dr. Sarah Larsen  
 Vice Provost and Dean, University of Houston Graduate School

3/4/2020  
 Approval Date

### REVISION LOG

Revision Number	Approved Date	Description of Changes
1	9/19/2014	Initial edition
2	3/06/2015	Section: II.B – Enrollment requirements update Section: II.D.2 – Requesting exceptions from the minimum GPA requirements in the second long semester
3	6/15/2015	Section I.C – Clarification of GTF policies for Inter-Institutional and Concurrent Enrollment program courses
4	1/12/2016	Section II.A – Addition of automatic Research Assistants (RA) GTF eligibility Section II.B – Correction of requirements for Reduced Course Load

		Sections II.D.1-4 – Corrected wording for academic standing requirements Section II.E – Addition of exception to GTF work requirements Section III.C – Correction of wording
5	1/20/2016	Section II – Correction of wording Section III.D – Clarification of employment terms for GTF
6	1/24/2017	Section I.A. – Addition of DMA degrees Section I – Updated hyperlinks Section I.C – Addition of Graduate Funding Webpage hyperlink Section II.A – Addition of DMA degrees. Section II.B. – Addition of sub-bullets re: reduced course-load exceptions Section II. – Correction of wording Section III.D. – Addition of new paragraph Section III.E. - Addition of sub-bullet re: provision exceptions, and correction of wording Section IV – Correction of hyperlink Sections IV.B. IV.C. IV.D. – Correction of wording Section IV.E. – Correction of wording Section IV.H. – Addition of sub-bullet, correction of wording Section V – Correction of hyperlinks and wording
7	1/26/2017	Section III.B.1. – Addition of new paragraph Section IV – Additional wording, and correction of formatting.
8	1/27/2017	Section II.B.1.a. – Additional wording Section III.E.1. – Addition of Overload Request Form hyperlink Section IV.G. – Additional wording
9	1/16/2020	Section I.C – Addition of new paragraph Section I.D – Addition of new paragraph
10	3/4/2020	Section III.E – Addition to new GTF language