Funding Your Graduate School

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Overview

• Terminology

• Types of funding:
  ✓ Research Assistantship
  ✓ Teaching Assistantship
  ✓ Graduate Assistantship
  ✓ Fellowships

• Hourly

• Internships

• Useful links and tips
Graduate School Terms

• Graduate Staff Appointments (employment)
  ✓ Research Assistantships
  ✓ Teaching Assistantships
  ✓ Graduate Assistantship - Administrative/Professional

• Fellowships (graduate scholarships)
  ✓ Internal
  ✓ External

• Quarter-time (0.25 FTE), Half-time (0.5 FTE)
Funding in Civil

- Assistantships are the only mechanism at Purdue that waive tuition.
- Half-time assistantships subsidize medical insurance.
- No separate application for funding in Civil Engineering.
- Funding is NOT guaranteed.
- CE will only make half-time offers (i.e., cannot be funded as 0.25 FTE in CE).
Research Assistantship (RA)

- Student employed by professor on a research project
- Terms/conditions set by professor within University regulations
- Contract for 9 months (academic year) or 12 months
- Annually renewed based on academic standing and progress made toward degree, and continued availability of funding
- Usually aligned with your research project
- Usually covers tuition, pays a stipend, some fees, may include medical insurance
- A RA may be combined with another assistantship or fellowship
Teaching Assistantship (TA)

- Student employed by the school/department
- Terms/conditions set by department within University regulations
- Contract by the semester for 4½ months or 9 months
- Renewal of contract based on course need (typically based on the number of students in the course) and performance
- TA obligation will be in addition to research project (for thesis options)
- Contract may be renewed as often as each session
- Usually covers tuition, pays a stipend, some fees, may include medical insurance
Teaching Assistantship (TA) Continued

- A TA may be combined with another assistantship or fellowship
- TA’s can be OUTSIDE of the department
  - Contact departments you have a strong background in (e.g., mathematics, chemistry, biology, physics, first-year engineering, computer science)
  - Check Math as they sometimes hire engr. students! http://www.math.purdue.edu/jobs/ta/.
- International Students
  - Can only work half time
  - Students from non-English speaking countries must pass the Oral English Proficiency Test before being permitted to be a contact TA
Graduate Assistantship (GA)

- “Professional” position
- CE grad office will email out any GA positions they find out about
- GA positions typically from:
  - Grad School
  - Dean of Students
  - Libraries
  - College of Engineering
  - Women in Engineering Program
- May be combined with another assistantship or fellowship
Fellowships

- Internal versus External
- Come in all shapes and sizes - award amounts vary greatly
- Terms/conditions are set by the provider of the funds
- Most internal fellowships require nomination
  - Bilsland Strategic Initiative and select others have application due earlier in the school year (November-January)
- May or may not include employment requirement
Fellowships Continued

• Some may be combined with RA or TA
• Funded by school, college, university, or independent source
• Some can be deferred when other funding is available
• Some accept student applications; others rely on nominations
• Length of support varies
• Most require an application and/or essay
How to Find Funding

• Check department websites
• Talk to professors about RA positions
  (only after reading articles they have written and know details of their research!!)
• Talk to the professors in your area about information on TA positions
• Check out professional/honor organizations in your major area
  (Tau Beta Pi, ASEE, SHPE, ASME, ASABE, NSBE, etc.)
• Review the Fellowship Database on the Graduate School Web site or the engineering list
• Apply for every fellowship for which you qualify – no matter the amount
• Check Your Emails from Jenny!!!
Offer Letter

• Letter offering you financial support for enrolling at an institution – different from admission letter

• Pay attention to the details
  ✓ Type of support (RA, TA, Fellowship)
  ✓ Length of support (dates)
  ✓ Terms and Conditions (What do you have to do?)
  ✓ Coverage (tuition, fees, insurance, amount of support)
  ✓ Cost of Living in that area compared to the support

• Acceptance is a binding contract
Hourly work

- Can work hourly at Purdue

- Student jobs may be: tutoring, food court positions, fundraising, grading, libraries, residence hall staff, etc.

- International students:
  - **CANNOT** have half-time assistantship AND work hourly
  - Can work up to 20 hours per week


- Hourly jobs do not provide for tuition remission
Internships

- If your adviser “okays” it you can participate in summer or semester long internships

- International students need a CPT (Curricular Practical Training) to participate off-campus (see ISS office for more information)

- You can obtain these independently at job fairs, via networking, websites or can talk to Kathy Heath in the CE Main office.
Tips and Useful Links

• Ask questions and get details before accepting
• Good planning avoids additional expenses
• International students → contact ISS for questions regarding obtaining social security numbers and other specifics
• Information for Funding at Purdue:
  • https://engineering.purdue.edu/Engr/Academics/Graduate
  • https://engineering.purdue.edu/CE/Academics/Graduate/Future/Funding
• Check Financial Aid for options to cover costs
  • http://www.purdue.edu/dfa/