

# Financial Support

## 6.1 Graduate Assistantships: RAs and TAs

From <https://physics.uiowa.edu/graduate/funding>

We make every effort to pay our graduate students an attractive stipend. Most students have what is called a 50% appointment, with the following stipends:

Stipends for 9-month Academic Year, 2025-2026

TA \$23,419

RA \$23,419

Stipends for summer assistantships are very limited. Summer TAs earn 2/9ths of their academic year salary.

After the first year of study, graduate students are eligible for Andrew Nelson Scholarship. This allows students to work with a faculty member on research for a month and get paid to do so.

For updated stipend information, contact us or visit our website.

Students with at least a 25% appointment:

- Receive health insurance benefits in the form of the Graduate Student Health Insurance Allowance.
- In 2025-2026 receive a full tuition scholarship but are responsible for fees. See more at (<https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.page>).
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### Tuition Scholarship & Mandatory Fees Information

Students holding a 25% or greater teaching or research assistantship appointment will be assured a tuition scholarship. The University's contribution towards the tuition for graduate assistants is listed below. The scholarship will be pro-rated, so that students who are registered for less than 9 s.h. will receive the appropriate percentage of full tuition according to the number of credit hours for which they are registered.

Please see the official tuition and fee table at the following link:

<https://registrar.uiowa.edu/tuition-fees>

### About TA positions

- Most TAs have a half-time (50%) appointment.
- The most common assignment is for TAs to teach three sections of a physics laboratory, each with three hours of contact with students, or four sections of an astronomy lab, each with two hours. These TAs work under the supervision of the laboratory coordinator and the professor in charge of the course.
- Other TAs serve as tutors, proctors, or graders.
- A half-time appointment requires up to 20 hours per week of service to the department. At the same time, you can take a full load of courses, up to 12 semester hours.

Some TAs also receive support as an RA. It is common for a student to be supported as a half-time TA during the academic year and as an RA for two months during the summer. Some students are supported during the academic year partly as a TA and partly as an RA. For example, a student supported with a one-quarter-time TA position and a one-quarter RA position would serve up to 10 hours per week as a TA and serve as an RA in the remaining time.

### **Priority for continued financial support**

The Department has a limited number of graduate teaching assistantships available. Priority for TA appointments will be given to students in their 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> years in the Department. After the 6<sup>th</sup> year students will be given a lower priority for TA support and support is not guaranteed.

## **6.2 Travel Funds for graduate Students**

### **Departmental Funds**

The Department of Physics and Astronomy has some funds from gifts to the Department through the University of Iowa Center for Advancement (UICA) to help pay for graduate student travel to summer schools and to present research at conferences.

Requests for funding should go to the DEO & Administrator. You will need to explain the rationale for this support, as well as provide a travel budget. The department does not routinely cover the cost of meals during the travel period. The travel funding request should be submitted as soon as possible prior to the trip. Students should also seek funding from other sources including the Graduate College (<https://gss.grad.uiowa.edu/funding/presentation-virtual-conference-funds>) as applicable. If approved and upon return, a short paragraph about what the student did on the trip and why it was important (or useful) for them to go, the impact of the trip or impressions of the meeting, must be sent to the DEO and Meagan Conley. The report will be used to let donors know how UICA funds are used in the Department.

### **Other Sources**

A graduate student can apply to the Graduate Student Senate for travel funds - forms can be gotten from the Graduate College or downloaded from the web - [Presentation Travel/Virtual Conference Funds | Graduate Student Senate - The University of Iowa \(uiowa.edu\)](#)

You may also want to try contacting Student Government at 335-3860; they have had some travel funds in the past.

## **6.3 Student Short-Term Loans**

<https://financialaid.uiowa.edu/types/loans/stl>

Student Short-Term Loans are zero-interest short-term loans available to students during the fall, winter, spring, and summer sessions. Loans are due at the end of the session in which they are received. Students must be enrolled for the current session when they are applying for the loan. If a student is applying for a loan during the summer sessions, they may be enrolled in any one of the summer sessions (three-week, six-week, or eight-week sessions).

Available loan amounts are \$200, \$350, or \$500. The maximum loan amount is \$500 per session. **The loan funds will be credited to the student's University account and will be applied to any unpaid charges.** If this creates a credit on the student's account (the current charges are less than the loan amount requested), the student may request a refund for the excess funds. To request a refund, mark the appropriate box on the application.

Applications are available on the second floor of Calvin Hall when the building is open (7:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).

### **Terms of the Loan**

- No co-signer is required
- No interest will accrue if the loan is repaid on time
- The loan funds will be applied directly to the student's University account as a payment and will be applied to any unpaid charges
- A loan in default will draw ten percent annual interest on the unpaid principal and interest until the loan is paid in full

### **Repayment and Due Dates**

Students will be billed for the loan repayment by Educational Computer Systems, Inc. (ECSI), a company partnered with the University of Iowa to collect loan payments. ECSI bills are issued the first day of the month and are usually due on the 22nd of the month; however, check your ECSI bill to verify the due date.

- A loan taken out during the **2025 Summer sessions** will be billed on an August 2025 ECSI bill.
  - If the loan is taken out after July 15, the loan will be billed on a September 2025 ECSI bill.
- A loan taken out during the **2025 Fall semester** will be billed on a November 2025 ECSI bill.
  - If the loan is taken out after October 15, the loan will be billed on a December 2025 ECSI bill.
  - If the loan is taken out after December 1, the loan will be billed on a January 2026 ECSI bill.
- A loan taken out during the **2025-2026 Winter session** will be billed on a February 2026 ECSI bill.
  - If the loan is taken out after January 15, the loan will be billed on a March 2026 ECSI bill.
- A loan taken out during the **2026 Spring semester** will be billed on an April 2026 ECSI bill.
  - If the loan is taken out after March 15, the loan will be billed on a May 2026 ECSI bill.
  - If the loan is taken out after April 15, the loan will be billed on a June 2026 ECSI bill.

### **Possible Reasons for Loan Disapproval**

- Application is incomplete or illegible
- Borrower is not registered for the current term
- Borrower has a previous unpaid Student Short-Term Loan
- Borrower is in loan default or owes a refund to the University
- Borrower recently paid a past-due University bill with a personal check (borrower must wait five working days for the check to clear before applying for a Student Short-Term Loan)

## **6.4 Awards and Scholarships - Departmental**

### **Goertz/Nicholson Memorial Fellowship Award**

This award is given in memory of Christoph Goertz, Ph.D. and Dwight Nicholson, Ph.D. The fellowship was instituted in November 1991 by the wives of Drs. Goertz and Nicholson, Ulrike Goertz and Jane Nicholson, Ph.D., after the death of their husbands on November 1, 1991.

The award is presented each spring to a graduate student in the Department of Physics and Astronomy who demonstrates the promise of achieving excellence in the field, preferably space plasma theory.

A faculty committee reviews and determines the recipient of this award.

### **Nicholson Fellowship**

The Nicholson Fellowship was established by two students of Dwight Nicholson, Mei Mei Shen and Guo-Zheng Sun, in memory of his commitment to helping new graduate students. It is supported by these two individuals and other students and friends of Dwight Nicholson. The scholarship consists of a cash award to help a new graduate student in physics or astronomy pay the miscellaneous expenses of starting his or her graduate career at Iowa. The scholarship will be awarded by the departmental committee responsible for graduate student recruitment. The choice of the individual to receive the award will be based on financial need and promise of academic achievement.

### **Swift Scholarship**

This scholarship is for an entering graduate student in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. All entering graduate students are eligible for the award, which is given at the discretion of the DEO. No application is required, qualified students are automatically considered.

### **John and Stacey Wahl Scholarship**

John Wahl was a 1944 and 1952 graduate of The University of Iowa's Department of Physics and Astronomy. During the late 1940s, between his graduate degrees, he worked for the Atomic Energy Commission at Los Alamos and later returned to The University of Iowa and received his Ph.D. in Nuclear Physics. During the course of his education, both he and Mrs. Wahl maintained an active family and were constantly under financial constraints. Hence their decision to establish a scholarship fund in 1984 to benefit only those students who are in similar circumstances – with both academic and personal responsibilities.

Mr. Wahl was employed by the Schlumberger company for 25 years before his death in 1982. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary E. Wahl (Stacey). She received a B.A. degree from The University of Iowa in 1938, taught high school mathematics in Iowa City during the 1940s and is a retired Assistant Professor of Mathematics at Western Connecticut College in Danbury.

This scholarship is designed to fund two awards each fall to physics or astronomy students, with a preference for graduate students who are married and have children. **Please let Meagan know if you are married and/or have children so you can be considered.**

The departmental faculty determines and approves who receive these awards.

### **Pfeiffer Family Scholarship**

This scholarship is awarded to one or more deserving students in space physics graduate studies. Requirement that recipient is a U.S. citizen or other lawful Permanent Resident of the U.S. This award is renewable if recipient continues to qualify under specified criteria.

### **G. William Pfeiffer and Marilyn M. Maltby Scholarship**

This scholarship is awarded to one or more deserving students in space physics graduate studies. Requirement that recipient is a U.S. citizen or other lawful Permanent Resident of the U.S. This award is renewable if recipient continues to qualify under specified criteria.

### **Andrew Nelson Fellowship**

The Andrew Nelson 1<sup>st</sup> Year Graduate Student Summer Research Fellowship introduces first-year graduate students to research opportunities under faculty guidance in the Department of Physics & Astronomy at The University of Iowa.

This fellowship is available to all first-year graduate students during the summer after their first academic year in the Department of Physics & Astronomy. Students receive a stipend of \$3,000 (summer 2025). At the end of the summer fellowship a report is due to the DGS summarizing your research. The report will be due by September 15th.

## **6.5 Awards and Scholarships - University**

### **Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award**

#### **Who May Be Nominated**

Teaching assistants from all academic units may be nominated for these awards. To be eligible, nominees must have had some type of formal student contact as part of their duties during the Spring, Summer, and/or Fall 2025. A teaching assistant who has won this award in the past may not be nominated again.

#### **How To Nominate**

- Nominations may be initiated by students, faculty, colleagues, departmental executive officers, or deans.
- **Self-nominations will not be accepted.**
- Nominations must follow the guidelines. Student nominators who need assistance with any aspect of the nomination process should contact a faculty member or the Departmental Executive Officer in the teaching department.
- Follow the guidelines within the Physics & Astronomy Department for internal deadline. Nominations are generally due to the departmental DEO in January or February (see Meagan for deadline date).

Please reference the following website for complete information regarding this award:

<https://uiowa.edu/cot/outstanding-teaching-awards>

## **6.6 Awards and Scholarships – NSF, DOE and NASA**

The National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy and NASA have programs to support graduate students. Please see their web sites for further details:

<http://www.nsfgrfp.org/> NSF graduate research fellowships

<https://grantbulletin.research.uiowa.edu/opportunities/physical-mathematical-sciences/archive> Office of Science fellowship program

<http://www.nasa.gov/> NASA fellowships