**Support Guarantee Standard Template**

Modify this template to your own department's needs and tone. L&S will need to review drafts of all formats that differ from this sample.

Dear (student name),

I am pleased to inform you that we have recommended your admission to the Graduate School at the University of Wisconsin‑Madison, and to offer you a guarantee of financial support while you work toward your [doctorate] in our department.

Provided you remain a graduate student in good standing in our Department and your teaching or other assigned responsibilities are performed well, this guarantee will provide support for a period of [usually four or five for a beginning graduate student or three for someone with a year or more of previous graduate work] continuous academic years. Appointments under this guarantee will be at the level of [at least 1/3 time]. The enclosed document “Terms and Conditions of Graduate Student Support Guarantees, 2020-21” provides further information about this support guarantee.

For your assistance in planning, the 2020-21 academic year contract begins August 17, 2020, with classes beginning September 2, 2020; the contract year ends May 16, 2021. Enclosed is a copy of our Departmental Criteria for Satisfactory Progress as a Graduate Student, to provide you with more details about our academic program and our expectations about what constitutes normal progress toward the degree.

[Insert any welcome or departmental specific information here]

We believe we have an outstanding graduate program, and look forward to having you join us. Like other graduate programs to which you are applying, we subscribe to the resolution of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States which does not require a decision from you until April 15, 2020. Of course, if you know your response before that date we hope you will let us know as soon as possible, but we ask for a written decision by April 15.

Sincerely,

Enclosures: Terms and Conditions of Graduate Student Support Guarantees, 2020-21

Criteria for Satisfactory Progress

Council of Graduate Schools resolution (necessary only for offers made prior to April 15; download .pdf at <https://cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution>)

# **University of Wisconsin‑Madison, College of Letters and Science**

# **Terms and Conditions of Graduate Student Support Guarantees, 2020-21**

The following types of support can fulfill graduate student support guarantees in the College of Letters and Science: teaching assistantship, project assistantship, research assistantship, lectureship, and fellowship or traineeship. All these types of support provide graduate students with valuable experience and training in addition to financial support. The assigned duties of teaching and project assistants may not be directly related to their degree requirements, while research assistantships and fellowship appointments provide an opportunity for students to pursue their degree work more directly.

Support guarantees are contingent on the student’s remaining a graduate student in good standing in the program making the original guarantee. They are also contingent on the graduate student performing adequately in any teaching or other assigned responsibilities. The first half‑year of service as a teaching or project assistant in a department is a probationary period. This offer letter is conditional pending the results of a criminal background check. If the results are unacceptable, the offer will be withdrawn or, if you have started employment, your employment will be terminated. For students who are non‑native speakers of English and who are appointed as teaching assistants, guarantees are also contingent on meeting departmental standards for spoken English proficiency. Failure to meet the required level of proficiency may lead to cancellation of an appointment and cancellation of the support guarantee.

Appointments and fellowships under this guarantee provide eligibility for a comprehensive health care coverage package. Teaching, research, and project assistant, and lecturer (SA) appointments of at least 33.4% under this guarantee qualify the graduate student for a full remission of resident and non-resident fees and tuition (students must still pay segregated fees each term, which were $725.98 for a graduate student carrying 8 or more credits in Spring 2020, and any other applicable fees).

Graduate School University Fellowship levels for 2020-21 are $22,909 (academic year, or 9-month) and $28,000 (annual, or 12-month). Graduate School University Fellowships under this guarantee cover tuition and segregated fees. Research assistants with a typical 50% appointment receive $20,304 (academic year appointments) and $24,816 (annual appointments). The 2020-21 full-time Teaching Assistant rate in our department is [**insert full-time TA rate**]. Appointment levels in our department typically range from [**insert TA appointment range**]. The full-time rate for an academic year (9-month) PA is $41,000, and the annual (12-month) full-time project assistant rate is $50,112. PA appointments in our department typically vary from [**insert PA appointment range**].

Rates and appointment levels may differ from program to program, but the rate will not be below the amount stated in your offer letter.