

Competitive Graduate Studies Funding for 2017-18

Graduate Studies is continuing to identify effective ways to use our limited funds to enhance the education of BYU's graduate students. In particular, we are attempting to refine our funding processes in keeping with the vision articulated by President Worthen in his address delivered at the beginning of the 2016-17 academic year, where he emphasized "inspired learning" and, more specifically, "experiential learning." As President Worthen acknowledges, *experiential learning* has become a buzzword, but he argues for a concept that "connects theory with application and deepens our understanding of the principles and truths we learn." He further amplifies the concept by arguing that "experiential learning can inspire and excite students to learn in ways that have a deep and long-lasting impact." Accordingly, Graduate Studies is placing particular emphasis on the degree to which proposed scholarly pursuits that are supported by Graduate Studies funds comply with this vision.

As a result of numerous conversations from faculty and college administrators, Graduate Studies has decided to make a major change in the use of funds that have been allocated in the past to Graduate Research Fellowships (GRF) and Graduate Mentoring Assistantships (GMA).

- The GRF program will be furloughed and will not be available for the 2018-19 academic year. A final decision regarding the disposition of this program will be determined later.
- All the funds that were allocated to both the GRF and the GMA programs will be applied to the GMA program.
- The intent of the GMA program is to support scholarship that meets the highest standards of scholarship and complies with the vision articulated by President Worthen in his message to the university at the beginning of the 2016-2017 academic year, and further emphasized this year. Proposers may want to re-read that address: Inspired Learning.
- The design of the GMA program is for faculty to mentor graduate students who in turn mentor under-graduates.
- The goal of the GMA program is to enable students (both undergraduate and graduate) to participate in a scholarly project that is of extraordinary and potentially life-changing experiential significance that would not be possible without funding from Graduate Studies.
- Funding is limited to a maximum of \$15,000, depending on the resource needs of the proposed project, and must be restricted to direct support of the proposed project. The application must include an itemized budget.
- Proposals are initiated by faculty and submitted to the dean of the college. The dean will evaluate the proposals and submit their rank-ordered proposals to Graduate Studies. Each college will establish its own deadlines for receiving proposals from the faculty. **Proposals are due to the CFAC Dean's Office by December 1, 2017.**
- The criteria for this award are as follows.
 - Students must be engaged in scholarship that goes beyond what is considered normal or routine for a high quality graduate experience in the discipline.
 - Students must be required to demonstrate a high degree of maturity, initiative, and independence.
 - In addition to a clear, coherent, but concise description of the scholarly content of the proposed project, the application must explain how it will enable the students to significantly deepen their understanding of the principles and truths of their discipline.
 - The application must provide a convincing argument that the proposed project will not be financially possible without funding from Graduate Studies. If it is to be performed in conjunction with other scholarly projects, the distinctive features of this project must be clearly identified.