

Office of the Provost

# Doctoral Fellowship & Graduate Assistantship Manual

The *St. John's University Doctoral Fellowship & Graduate Assistantship Manual* comprises of the following main sections:

- 1.) Award Categories
- 2.) Requirements for Students
- 3.) Responsibilities of Supervisors
- 4.) Summer Doctoral Fellowships/Assistantships
- 5.) Proof of Employment Eligibility Verification
- 6.) Access to Banner and Shared Network Drives
- 7.) Health Insurance Benefits

## 1. Award Categories

### A. Fellowships

#### 1. Doctoral Fellowships

Doctoral Fellowships are awarded to doctoral students only. These fellowships reside only in academic departments. Doctoral Fellows conduct research and may teach. Teaching activities might include lab supervision or tutoring students. Research must be confirmed to the needs of the program, faculty, or student. Doctoral Fellows work up to **20 hours per week**.

### B. Assistantships

#### 1. Teaching/Research Assistantships

Teaching/Research Assistantships are available to both master's and doctoral students and are assigned within academic departments. Students in these roles support faculty by assisting with instruction and/or conducting research. Teaching duties may include grading, managing lab sessions, or assisting in course preparation—but **not serving as the instructor of record**. Research duties involve supporting faculty-led projects or scholarly activities. These assistants may work up to 20 hours per week. This category is distinct from the Doctoral Fellowship in that it carries a lower stipend and is not exclusive to doctoral candidates.

**Please note that doctoral students may only be assigned to this category if their responsibilities specifically involve overseeing student laboratory sections.** All other doctoral students should be considered for Doctoral Fellowship appointments.

#### 2. Research Assistantships

Research Assistantships are awarded to master's-level students and are focused exclusively on academic research. Students in these roles work under the guidance of faculty to support research projects and scholarly work. Research Assistants are not assigned teaching responsibilities and do not serve in instructional roles. These positions also require up to 20 hours of work per week and are designed to enhance the student's research skills and experience.

#### 3. Graduate Assistantships

Assistantships are available to master's students and are assigned to offices or departments across the University. These roles are intended to provide students with meaningful, professional experiences that are **directly related to their field of study**. These roles should be structured to enhance the student's applied learning and career preparation in alignment with their academic program.

Students in Assistantship positions may work up to **20 hours per week** under the supervision of a university administrator or department lead. While the work may vary by placement, it must contribute to the student's academic or professional development. **Clerical or purely administrative tasks are not appropriate**, and departments with such needs are encouraged to hire a **graduate student worker** instead.

## 2. Requirements for Students

### Eligibility

Only matriculated, full-time students (9 credits/semester) are eligible for Fellowship and Assistantship awards. International students must have an F-1 visa or an appropriate alternative under which work is permitted. F-1 visa students may not exceed **20 hours of work** in any week during the academic semester. J-1 scholars should not be enrolled full-time in degree programs and cannot be awarded Fellowships or Assistantships.

All awardees must complete the INS I-9 to demonstrate eligibility. Tuition waivers for credit beyond the number required for a student's degree program require approval from his/her supervisor and the Office of the Provost. Support will be given for only one degree at each level.

Students who receive Doctoral Fellowship and Assistantship awards are not eligible to receive any other compensation from the University.

### Renewals

All positions are awarded for **one academic year** at a time (Fall and Spring only). A renewal is **not assumed** but will be determined by the best interests of the program, a student's academic performance, and previous Fellowship or Assistantship performance.

Fellowships may only be renewed for a **maximum** of five (5) years. Doctoral Fellows are required to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5 at all times to be eligible to renew their awards. Doctoral Fellows may have an "in progress" grade on their academic records at the time of renewal, for example, during the final stages of completing a dissertation/thesis or during an internship. This "in progress" grade does not affect a renewal. A renewal will not be granted, however, to students with incomplete (INC) grades.

Assistantships may be renewed for a **maximum** of two (2) years except for doctoral students under the category of Teaching/Research Assistant. Due to the classification of doctoral students, these may extend up to five (5) years. Graduate assistants are required to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.2 at all times to be eligible to renew their awards. Graduate assistants may have an "in progress" grade on their academic record until their thesis are completed, if applicable. This "in progress" course grade does not affect a renewal. A renewal will not be granted, however, to students with incomplete (INC) grades.

## 3. Responsibilities of Supervisor

### Purpose

The purpose of the Fellowship and Assistantship program is to provide a graduate student with the opportunity to supplement coursework with practical experience related to the student's educational course of study and career objectives. These positions are an extension to, and application of, classroom instruction through hands-on experience with guidance from experienced faculty, administrators, or staff.

The supervisors – qualified faculty members and administrators – directly support the student's experience by working closely with the student. Faculty supervisors are required to monitor attendance and the student's compliance with

Fellowship and Assistantship requirements. Administrative supervisors are required to monitor attendance and the student's compliance with Fellowship and Assistantship requirements.

### Attributes of Fellowships and Assistantships

The Fellowship and Assistantship experience should accomplish some or all of the following:

- Promote the discovery and application of knowledge through research.
- Enable the student to develop important experiential skills which cannot be taught in the classroom.
- Improve the student's analytical critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Enhance the ability to collect, review, and synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- Enable the student to compare theoretical ideas learned in the classroom with activities in academic and professional settings.
- Introduce professional expectations and responsibilities in academic and professional environments.
- Encourage the student to apply the technical skills learned in the classroom to a real-world environment.

### Being Compliant

In compliance with applicable law, St. John's University will not approve a Fellowship or an Assistantship position unless all of the following are true:

- The Fellowship or Assistantship experience is primarily for the benefit of the student.
- Fellows and Assistants do not displace regular employees but conduct their responsibilities under close observation of a faculty member or a supervisor.
- Fellows and Assistants must be excused from any and all duties during regularly scheduled class times.
- The sponsoring department or office that provides the assistantship may not derive immediate advantage from the activities of the Fellow and Assistant, and on occasion, the department's operations may be impeded.

### Hours

Fellows and Assistants are limited to **20 hours of work per week**. All Fellows and Assistants are expected to work **for 15 weeks each semester**. Assistants are not expected to be present during breaks or when classes are not in session, except under limited circumstances. However, a Fellow may be required to be on campus during breaks and/or when classes are not in session, because of the nature of the Fellow's research/particular project.

Fellows and Assistants may, at the discretion of their faculty supervisor, occasionally put in fewer hours in given weeks and make-up hours in other weeks. However, this practice cannot be customary, nor should it be imposed upon students if it risks interfering with their coursework or ability to complete their studies and make timely progress toward graduation. In the case of sick days, the time will be made up according to the student's schedule and the department's needs. Excessive sick days are not acceptable, and the student may be at risk of losing their assistantship.

### Contracts

The contract term for all standard one-year Fellowships and Assistantships is one week prior to the first day of classes in the Fall semester through the last day of final exams in the Spring semester. The contract term for all one-semester Fellowships and Assistantships is one week prior to the first day of classes of the semester through the last day of final exams for the semester. If a Fellow or Assistant is required to work during the holidays or breaks it must be stated in his/her contract and must be approved by the Office of the Provost.

If a student's determined hours fall on a day that is a holiday or the University is closed, the student does not need to make up those hours during that week on another day. However, Fellows and Assistants may need to perform their assigned duties on a different day if the schedule changes (for example, if a laboratory class is rescheduled because of a holiday).

Fellows and Assistants cannot begin an assignment without a signed contract. Once signed, contracts cannot be modified without the approval of the Office of the Provost.

### Termination/Resignation

A Fellow or Assistant may be terminated from his/her position, if at any time the student withdraws from full-time student status, does not register, is placed on academic probation, fails to perform assigned duties, or otherwise fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress. Faculty supervisors, who wish to terminate a Fellow or Assistant, must communicate the reasons for the termination, in writing, to the student's Department Chair, who will then consult with the Dean in the school/college where the student resides. Final decisions regarding a Fellow's or Assistant's termination must be approved by the Office of the Provost. Administrative supervisors, who wish to terminate a Fellow or Assistant, must communicate the reasons for the termination, in writing to the Office of the Provost.

If a Fellow or Academic Assistant resigns from his/her position prior to the completion of his/her contract, the faculty supervisor must contact the student's Department Chair, who will communicate the resignation to his/her Dean and then to the Office of the Provost to terminate the contract, stipend and remaining tuition remission allocation. Administrative supervisors must communicate the resignation to the Office of the Provost to terminate the contract, stipend, and remaining tuition remission allocation.

**In such cases, students need to be aware that they may be financially responsible for paying any remaining tuition after termination of their contract.**

### Voluntary Health Related Leave of Absence

Students should reference the following link:

<https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/health-and-wellness/health-related-leave>

## 4. Summer Fellowships/Assistantships

A limited number of Fellowship and Assistantship positions are available during the summer, but only **if their responsibilities specifically involve overseeing student laboratory sections**. Awards can be for three (3) or six (6) credits per student but no more. Credits can be taken over one or two sessions. Students must commit to 10 hours per week for each three-credit course. Dates of summer contracts are concurrent with the dates of the academic summer sessions. However, with the mutual consent of both the faculty supervisor and the student, hours may be redistributed throughout the summer as opposed to serving them all during the summer session which they are enrolled. Such arrangements shall be in writing and approved by the Department Chair. Teaching and tutoring expectations during the regular academic year do not apply during summer.

## 5. Proof of Employment Eligibility Verification

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security Form I-9 requires students to present original documents as proof of identity and employment authorization. The I-9 form and instructions can be found at: <https://www.stjohns.edu/who-we-are/leadership-and-administration/administrative-offices/office-senior-vice-president-and-chief-operating-officer/human-resources/hr-forms>

## New York State Withholding IT-2104

Students must also print and complete the NYS Withholding IT-2104 form:

<https://www.stjohns.edu/who-we-are/leadership-and-administration/administrative-offices/office-senior-vice-president-and-chief-operating-officer/human-resources/hr-forms>

*If a student is unable to provide this information, his or her employment processing cannot be completed, and they cannot begin their fellowship/assistantship.*

## 6. Fellows and Assistants who require access to Banner and Shared Network Drives

### For Students Who Need Access to Banner or Shared Network Drives

Banner access is granted only to those students who must access the systems records and information to perform their job functions. If the supervisor determines that a Fellow or Assistant will need limited access to the Banner system and/or to shared network drives, he or she should discuss these needs with the appropriate Banner data owner. The authority to grant limit user access is the sole responsibility of the University's Banner data owners.

### Terminating Access to Banner and Shared Network Drives

To ensure the security of the University's data and information systems, the student's supervisor is responsible for notifying the Banner data owner of the need to terminate a Fellow's or Assistant's access to Banner and/or shared network drives when access is no longer required. The student's supervisor should conduct access reviews at the end of each semester to ensure that Banner access has been terminated.

## 7. Health Insurance Benefits

Fellows and Assistants, who need assistance with Health Insurance Benefits, should refer to the following:

<https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/health-and-wellness/student-health-services>