

Simon Fraser University
Maggie Benston Centre 1100
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6

TEL 778.782.3042
FAX 778.782.3080



gradstudies@sfu.ca
www.sfu.ca/grad

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate

DATE November 14, 2024

FROM Mary O'Brien, Chair of Senate Graduate Studies
Committee (SGSC) and Dugan O'Neil, Vice-
President, Research and Innovation (VPRI)

RE: Minimum Funding update

For information: Senate is receiving information on the status of PhD minimum funding as requested at the December 2023 meeting.

Graduate General Regulation (GGR) 1.17 "Minimum Funding" was passed by Senate in December 2023. As a result, students entering all PhD programs in September 2024 or later must receive annual funding of at least \$28,000 for four or more years.

Upon passage of and as outlined in the GGR, graduate programs were required to develop a program-level funding policy that:

- a) includes the program's definition of equity as it applies to funding;
- b) provides a realistic expectation of the time that students will take to complete the graduate program;
- c) indicates the number of terms that students will be funded;
- d) establishes a funding level that meets or exceeds \$28,000;
- e) indicates the extent to which future funding is based on students applying for external scholarships and awards (or equivalents);
- f) indicates potential sources of funding that count toward meeting the minimum funding level;
- g) indicates the timing of students' funding payments throughout the year (i.e., whether equal payments will be provided every term or whether payments may fluctuate over the academic year);
- h) provides information about the impact of Co-operative Education or Internships on the number of eligible terms of guaranteed funding; and
- i) clearly delineates program-level adjustments in the case of winning scholarships and awards.

These funding policies were submitted to and approved by Graduate Studies during the Spring 2024 term, and all PhD programs now have an approved PhD funding policy. The mean guaranteed minimum funding level in these policies is \$28,515, and the maximum is \$33,400. While the impact of minimum funding is difficult to determine at this point, it is worth noting that there was a 2% increase in PhD enrolments between the Fall 2023 and Fall 2024 terms.

Graduate Studies is working with IT Services on the development of a funding tracking portal. The portal will provide real-time funding data for academic units and Graduate Studies. It is currently undergoing testing and will be ready for use by April 2025.