**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE**

Financial Aid

Scholarships, Awards and Grants

Competitive Graduate Award

Amount: Research assistantship that includes tuition waiver and $8,370 stipend
Deadline: January 15
Audience: Graduate (Domestic), Graduate (International)

Purpose

The purpose of Competitive Graduate Awards (CGA) is to support highly qualified new graduate students who are accepted into master's degree programs at SIUE.

Award Structure & Benefits

CGAs are granted for the nine-month academic year (fall and spring semesters). Recipients of the CGA are awarded a Research Assistantship (RA) position to conduct the research proposed in the application under the guidance of the selected faculty mentor. The RA position will be awarded at the 25% level, which includes an average of 10 hours per week devoted to research activities. The RA position provides significant benefits, including:

- **Full tuition waiver for both fall and spring semesters** for up to 12 credit hours per semester. (Recipients are responsible for paying fees.)
- **Highly competitive stipend rate of $984 per month** ($492.35 per semi-monthly paycheck), for a total of $8370 for the entire academic year, prior to tax deductions. *(A stipend rate of over $24/hour!)*
  For 2024-2025 awardees, the RA contract will span from 9/1/24 through 5/15/25.
- **Summer tuition waiver** for the summer following the awarded academic year for up to 9 credit hours**.** CGA recipients wishing to utilize the summer tuition waiver must complete the Earned Summer Tuition Waiver Form found on the GA Forms website and submit it to the Graduate School by the first day of the summer term.
- **Eligible to apply for the Research Grants for Graduate Students funding during the first fall term of enrollment** to support the costs associated with executing scholarly activities.

As Research Assistants, all Graduate Assistantship eligibility requirements, policies, and procedures apply to CGA recipients. Since the CGA Research Assistantship is a 25% position, CGA recipients ARE eligible to accept a second Graduate Assistantship position at a level of 25% or below.

Eligibility

- The applicants must be one of the following:
  - a fully admitted new graduate student who is accepted as a classified student in a masters graduate degree program at SIUE and whose first term of enrollment will be no earlier than the summer preceding the fall award period (in the event that a student applies to multiple graduate programs at SIUE, the student must be fully admitted to the program indicated on the CGA application). For example, eligibility for the 2024-2025 academic year award is limited to new graduate students beginning their SIUE graduate programs in either the summer 2024 or fall 2024 semesters.
  - Students who have completed a prior graduate program at SIUE are not eligible to apply.
  - an SIUE undergraduate approved for admission to and currently enrolled in an approved combined bachelor to masters program provided they will be fully admitted to the graduate program before the fall award period (Note that this requirement includes having completed the baccalaureate degree)
  - a previously-enrolled graduate student who have been out of their program for at least 4 semesters at the time of the CGA application
- The applicant must have a minimum 3.25 overall undergraduate cumulative GPA (*all undergraduate courses at all institutions attended*) and, if relevant, a minimum 3.25 graduate cumulative GPA in order to apply.
- The applicant must have an identified SIUE faculty member who will work with the applicant on a scholarly activity during the award period.
- SIUE employees and State of Illinois Civil Service employees at other universities are not eligible for the award.
- Currently-enrolled SIUE undergraduate student workers are eligible to apply provided they meet the above requirements.

All eligible candidates are encouraged to apply.

Application Deadlines

- The CGA Application and all required materials, as well as the graduate degree program application materials, **must be submitted by January 15 at 4:30 pm.**
  Any applications and materials that are not received by the deadline will not be considered for review.

Application Details

To be eligible for consideration for a CGA, an applicant must have both a complete CGA application and a complete degree-seeking application for summer or fall on file by the CGA application deadline.

Applicants with a complete degree-seeking application who are pending a final admission decision are eligible to apply to the CGA.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that both the CGA application requirements AND the graduate degree program application requirements are completed by the CGA deadline. Incomplete CGA applications will not be reviewed. Complete CGA applications that do not have the corresponding completed degree program applications will not be reviewed. Note that a complete application will show as "complete" and contains all the required uploaded documents.

The CGA application must be submitted and completed through the SIUE Application Center. **You can access and submit your CGA application using the link below in red:**

Access the CGA Application for 2024-2025

In order to submit your CGA Application, you must do the following:

- FIRST - create a user name and password for the SIUE Application Center . Be sure to submit your application prior to uploading any necessary materials.
- NEXT - enter your user name and password and proceed uploading your documents into the Application Center.

Note: If you are using Microsoft Edge as your web browser, it may cause complications with your application. (Recommended web browsers are Google Chrome or Firefox.)

Once you create your account, you may go into the SIUE Application Center as often as necessary to upload, review or update your information before the closing date. You do not need to have your entire packet ready before you submit your application. You may submit your application first, then go back into the portal and upload your documents.

The CGA application includes the following items:

1. One completed Recommendation Form from someone who can speak to the applicant's ability to be successful in graduate studies and research. A Recommendation Form will be emailed to the recommender listed in the application that allows the recommender to respond to specific questions about the applicant's experiences and abilities.
2. Competitive Graduate Award Faculty Mentor form [pdf] - You must initiate a discussion with a potential SIUE faculty mentor to introduce yourself, discuss your research interests, and inquire if the faculty member is willing to serve as a CGA Faculty Mentor for you. To find a potential mentor to contact, visit the department within the SIUE website to learn about the faculty and their research. You can also contact the Graduate Program Director in your program for assistance. The Graduate School does not provide a Faculty Mentor for potential CGA applicants.
3. Competitive Graduate Award Research Questions [Word doc] - Five short answer questions that prompt you to describe your proposed scholarly activity under the CGA, the background of the intended research, the research timeline/activities, your interest in the research area, and your preparedness to conduct a research project and excel in your graduate program. The proposed project should be suitable for your skill level and reasonable for the time period of the award. You are expected to average 10 hours per week on this work.

Statements must be typed. Hard copy or mailed documents will not be accepted.

Application and Award Timeline

The general timeline for award application, review and notification is as follows.

Timeline	Task
January 15	Complete CGA application package and complete application for admission as a degree-seeking student for the following summer or fall must be on file.
Late January	Graduate Program Directors complete review of CGA applications.
February	Graduate Student Award Committee reviews CGA applications and recommends awards.
March	The Graduate School notifies departments and applicants by email of the results.

Review Criteria

Eligible applications are reviewed by departments and the Graduate Student Awards Faculty Committee on the below criteria according to the CGA Evaluation Rubric:

- Feasibility and quality of proposed scholarly activity
- Research interest and knowledge
- Potential to excel in graduate program

Conditions of Award

Recipients of Competitive Graduate Awards:

- Must carry 6 semester hours or more of graduate-level work throughout the term of the CGA
- Must remain in good academic standing throughout the term of the CGA
- Must participate satisfactorily in a scholarly activity mentored by a faculty member throughout the term of the CGA
- Must present a poster presentation summarizing their research activities at the Graduate School Spring Research Symposium at the conclusion of their first year
- As the recipient of a Research Assistantship, CGAs must comply with all Graduate Assistant requirements, policies, and procedures.

If a recipient fails to comply with these conditions, the Graduate School may revoke the award.

If you have any questions regarding the Competitive Graduate Award, please reach out to the Graduate School at 618-650-3010 or graduateschool@siue.edu.

View information about acceptance of a CGA