

Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
Funding Plan for the Implementation of a Continuous Enrollment Policy for Students in Ph.D. Programs

September 2009

The Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning is supportive of the Continuous Enrollment Policy for Students in Ph.D. programs that will be effective in Fall Term 2010. Our program and our students will benefit from the University changes that come with the new policy. An important component of the plans for this change is the identification of University sources to pay any new tuition costs that arise due to the policy. This document contains a description of the Taubman College's funding plan.

Student Support

The College, in partnership with the Rackham Graduate School, has been working to increase the support it provides to the students in its Ph.D. programs. The 2009-2010 academic year is the fourth year of a new funding program created through commitments of resources from both the College and Rackham. The College is seeing the results of this increase in funding in its ability to recruit students to the Ph.D. programs and to provide appropriate support to them over the course of their studies. We will continue to see positive changes in our programs as successive cohorts enter with funding commitments.

The Taubman College and Rackham will jointly evaluate the program this year; an activity that will lead either to a renewal or a revision of the funding agreement. This existing program is an important base of support for the students in our programs. In this document, we assume that the commitments of resources by both Taubman College and Rackham will continue, and the plan for funding the increased registrations that arise from the implementation of the Continuous Enrollment Policy builds on that base. Rackham and Taubman College have agreed that if the evaluation of the existing program leads to any changes in the support arrangement, they will work together to revise the funding plan for continuous enrollment at the same time. Any revision to the funding plan for Continuous Enrollment will continue to achieve the goal that the tuition costs associated with increased terms of registration due to the policy change will be paid by a University source.

Currently, students in our programs are admitted with commitments for four years of support that includes stipend, health insurance, and tuition grants which may come in the form of GSRA or GSI positions. The College works with students whose courses of study extend beyond their committed support to identify other sources of support.

Effective with the Fall 2010 implementation of the Continuous Enrollment Policy, the Taubman College will provide tuition-only fellowships to candidates, who are making satisfactory academic progress, are required to register under the Continuous Enrollment Policy if they would not have registered under our current practices, are not otherwise supported. This practice, combined with the increased support that has been implemented in recent years, will achieve the goals of the Continuous Enrollment Policy. Our Ph.D. students will reap the benefits of registered student status without incurring additional financial costs.

Enrollment changes due to a Continuous Enrollment Policy

The Continuous Enrollment Policy will require students in Ph.D. programs to register in fall and winter terms from matriculation to degree completion, unless they are on an approved leave of absence. Based on our current enrollment patterns and the size of our doctoral programs, we expect to see an additional 10-20 candidates registering when the policy is implemented. The recent changes in our support of Ph.D. students result in a broader range of estimate than for other UM schools and colleges. Our doctoral population is shifting to an ever greater proportion of students who were admitted with four year funding commitments. We expect that the actual change will be at the smaller end of the range, although our plan is sufficient even if the enrollment change is at the high end of the range.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory progress toward the degree is assessed by the program faculty working most closely with an individual student. It will not mean the same thing for every area of study within the College, nor does satisfactory progress mean the same thing for every student in a given program. Individual circumstances affect the pace at which students can work, and graduate program faculty are best qualified to make decisions about students' progress.

Students who are not making satisfactory progress will be given written notice, and provided guidance on what needs to be accomplished in a given time period in order to return to satisfactory progress status again. Generally, this assessment will be part of the annual evaluation completed by the students and their advisors. Students who are given notice of a lack of satisfactory progress will remain eligible for additional terms of tuition-only fellowship support, when they meet the general eligibility requirements that the College sets, in order to provide them the opportunity of making the necessary progress to regain satisfactory standing. Students who do not meet the agreed-on progress milestones will not be eligible for further tuition support until they complete them and have a plan for continued progress.

Funding Available for Tuition Payments

The Taubman College, working with the Rackham Graduate School, has identified the sources of funding necessary for the tuition-fellowship program described here.

The University uses an activity-based model to develop General Fund Budget Allocations to academic units. Due to the activity-based formulas, the increase in registrations results in an increase in the Taubman College's General Fund Budget Allocation. This funding will be budgeted for tuition fellowships.

At the effective date of the new policy, the candidacy tuition rate will be reduced in direct proportion to the expected increase in registration. This reduction results in savings in the Taubman College due to the current levels of support for candidates in our Ph.D. program. These savings will continue to be directed to student support and will fund a portion of the needed tuition fellowships.

Supplementing the College's resources will be an allocation of tuition fellowships through a new Rackham financial aid program designed for this purpose.

Process

Tuition fellowships will be allocated to the doctoral programs as part of the College's annual process for determining and allocating student support funds, currently used to allocate donor provided and General Fund monies. The Program chairs work with the doctoral program coordinators and faculty committees to match support sources to the students in their programs. Candidates making satisfactory academic progress who do not have a GSI or GSRA appointment, or a UM or external fellowship, will be awarded a tuition fellowship through this new funding program.