SGS Award Announcement

To: Graduate Coordinators and Administrators
From: Alice Brummell, Coordinator, Student Support and Financial Aid
CC: Joshua Barker, Dean, Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Education; Charmaine Williams, Acting Vice-Dean, Students; Laura Stathopoulos, Director, Graduate Awards and Financial Aid
Date: April 2nd, 2019
Re: Doctoral Completion Award 2019-20

The Doctoral Completion Award (DCA) program is intended to support full-time PhD and SJD students who are beyond the funded cohort and within time-limit for the degree.

Allocations

Allocations will be distributed by SGS in May 2019. Graduate units will receive their DCA allocation through their Faculty Dean/Vice Dean's Office. Single-unit Faculty allocations will receive their allocation from SGS via the unit's secure folder on the SGS Drive.

In keeping with past years, the allocations are based on each Faculty's/unit's rolling 3-yr average enrolment of students within time limit but no longer within the funded cohort, weighted according to average support in divisional and cognate disciplines over the same time period; the years included are 2015-16/2016-17/2017-18. Funds will be transferred to Faculties at the start of the fiscal year via Planning & Budget.

Eligibility requirements (minimum)

For each session the award is held, DCA recipients must be:

- **registered as a full-time** PhD or SJD student (DMA, EdD and flexible-time PhD students are ineligible); and
- **beyond the program's funded cohort** as established by the graduate Faculty/unit practice (e.g. years 5 & 6 for most PhD programs, and years 6 & 7 for PhD U programs); and
- **within time limit** for the degree (students on approved program extensions are ineligible as their year of study remains the same); and
- **in good standing** in their graduate program and making satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree requirements.

The eligibility criteria provided here outline the minimum requirements only. Graduate units may impose additional criteria to apply, receive, or hold and DCA. Please be sure to communicate any additional requirements or conditions to applicants.

**OSOTF Requirement**

While students receiving a DCA are not required to be OSOTF eligible, approximately 15% of the overall DCA funds are OSOTF-restricted and **MUST** be awarded to domestic students who meet OSOTF
eligibility requirements (i.e. Canadian citizen/Permanent Resident, Ontario resident, & demonstrate financial need). Eligibility is only demonstrated through the completion of the SGS Financial Need Assessment (FNA) Form - OSOTF.

In order to fulfill this condition, it is strongly recommended that units communicate the above OSOTF requirement to their students and request their domestic students to complete the SGS FNA Form so that they may be selected for the OSOTF-restricted funds. While the demonstration of need may be shared with the units’ selection committee, detailed financial information (i.e. the form itself) does not need to be shared.

Financial need is normally demonstrated when a negative or a near zero balance appears in the “TOTAL NEED” field on page 2 of the SGS FNA Form. Showing a sizeable positive balance in the “TOTAL NEED” field is normally not considered as a demonstration of financial need, unless extenuating circumstances are also reported (supporting documentation must be submitted).

Award Administration

The DCA is managed locally at the graduate Faculty/unit. Individual graduate Faculties/units may establish their own application process, selection criteria, adjudication and payment so long as the minimum eligibility requirements are met by all recipients. All units are encouraged to properly document their DCA administration process as SGS reserves the right to audit these processes as needed.

- Units that do require a DCA application from students are encouraged to include the SGS FNA form as a required component of their application;
- Units that do not require a DCA application from students are encouraged to request their domestic students to complete the SGS FNA form so that they would be eligible for the OSOTF-restricted DCA funds;
- Graduate faculties/units will determine when to adjudicate and to select DCA recipients (e.g. once annually or per session);
- Graduate faculties/units will decide the value, number of sessions and disbursement schedule of the DCA; the award value need not be the same for each recipient;
- Graduate Faculties/units may opt to reserve a small portion of their DCA budget specifically for OSOTF eligible recipients and communicate to domestic applicants that award amounts will be higher for those who demonstrate OSOTF eligibility by submitting a completed SGS FNA form;
- Eligible students may start holding a 2019-20 DCA as early as the summer session (i.e. May 1, 2019);
- Recipients may hold the DCA multiple times provided they are eligible during each session for which the award is held;
- Graduate Faculties/units may offer the DCA retroactively within the same fiscal year provided students are eligible in each of the session for which the award is held;
- Graduate Faculties/units may opt not to award all available funds in any given year and carryforward the unused funds to the next fiscal year based on future needs.

Payment of Award

The DCA is intended to be applied to the student’s tuition fees via ROSI or may be issued in accordance to established Faculty/unit award payment processes.

Reporting Procedure

In March of each year, the Graduate Awards Office (GAO) distributes the DCA Year-End Report specific to each graduate unit to verify payments issued within the fiscal year (May 1 – April 30).

The report requires graduate units to confirm/enter the following information:
- Recipient information (name, program, year of study etc.)
- Award start session
- DCA amount awarded
- DCA funds Issued*
- Registration status at time of payment
- Year of study at time of payment
- Legal status
- Province of residency
- Country of Citizenship
- Comments/Rationale for any exceptional circumstances or unusual payments
- Eligibility for OSOTF restricted funds as per the students’ completed SGS FNA Form on file**

* DCA awards offered in current fiscal year but are scheduled to process after April 30th (e.g. the final instalment of a 2019-2020 DCA award to be paid in summer 2020) are to be reported as carryforward, and will show as “funds issued” on the next DCA Year-End Report.

** The SGS FNA Form must be used to identify OSOTF eligibility. DCA recipients listed by units as “OSOTF eligible” on the DCA Year-End Report, MUST have on file the respective completed FNA Form which confirms eligibility.

Contact and Resources
For further information on the DCA, please feel free to contact me.

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