

Graduate Program  
Department Infectious Diseases

Funds to Support Graduate Student Travel to Professional Meetings

Overview

Graduate students planning to attend a professional meeting to present a paper describing their research may be able to secure funding to support their travel expenses from a number of different sources. In addition to grants held by the student's major professor, support for meeting-related travel expenses and meeting registration may be requested from the College, the Graduate School, the University, and/or the professional association hosting the meeting. This document provides a brief explanation of how students can apply for this support.

Graduate students in the Department of Infectious Diseases, particularly those in the final stages of their program, are encouraged to explore all potential opportunities for funding to support travel to national and international scientific meetings so that they may present their research findings to the greater scientific community. All travel funds are awarded competitively; application for financial support does not guarantee that support will be provided. Criteria for selecting awards and deadline dates may change from year to year. Be sure to secure current guidelines from the individuals in charge of handling the award for which you are applying prior to making application.

College funds to support graduate student travel

The College of Veterinary Medicine has funding to support graduate student travel through two programs, the Graduate Student Travel Funds which is awarded on an as needed basis year-round through the Graduate Affairs Committee, and the bi-annual Pfizer Award for Graduate Student Travel.

Application for Graduate Student Travel Funds should be made to the Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee. Students are encouraged to contact the Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee prior to application to inquire about the availability of funds (contact the Office of the Dean of Research and Graduate Affairs to find out who is chairing the committee – it changes every year). Applicants should include an abstract of the presentation, a cover letter from the major professor, and a budget. Selection is competitive and based on the content/merit of the abstract, the scope/prestige of the meeting (national or regional), the scholastic standing of the student, the degree sought and the year of study, and whether the abstract has been accepted for presentation.

Application for the Pfizer Travel Award for Residents and Graduate Students is made twice a year through the office of the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Affairs. Applications should include an abstract for the presentation and a cover letter describing the meeting signed by the major professor or resident mentor and the department head. Recipients of the Pfizer Travel Award are selected based on the content of research, scope of the meeting (national or regional), and whether or not the person has been invited to present the paper (abstract accepted). In general, students who have not received travel funds from the College for a meeting within the preceding year will be given priority for each of these awards.

#### Graduate School funds to support graduate student travel: North American meetings

The Graduate School has limited funds to assist graduate students when traveling to present papers at professional conferences. Because of limitations on resources, travel funds will be primarily for doctoral students who are at advanced stages in their graduate programs and are presenting results of their dissertation research findings. If the conference is to be held within North America, requests for travel assistance should be sent to the dean of the Graduate School. If travel is to an international conference to be held outside of North America, requests for assistance should be sent to the Office of the Vice President for Research (see below).

A student receiving an invitation (abstract accepted) to present a paper at a professional meeting within North America may submit a travel request to the Graduate School. Each request must be accompanied by evidence that the student's research has been accepted for presentation and by an abstract of the research to be presented. The following guidelines will be used in considering all such requests:

- (1) First preference will be given to doctoral students who have been enrolled full-time for at least five completed semesters at UGA. A request from a master's student will be given consideration only if the department in which the student is enrolled does not offer a doctoral degree.
- (2) The meeting or conference to be attended must be of regional or national importance.
- (3) Approval of travel requests for a student will be limited to one per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).
- (4) A student submitting a request must possess a minimum cumulative graduate grade point average of 3.50 based on at least two years of full-time graduate study at The University of Georgia with no grades of "Incomplete" or "No Report" or their equivalent.
- (5) Funding will be for first or second authored research only. No more than one student will be funded for presenting the same research.
- (6) Funding will not be provided to students employed as instructors or classified employees.
- (7) The applicant must be registered for classes during the semester of his/her travel. If a student is traveling between semesters, he/she must also be registered for the semester following the travel.
- (8) Each travel request must be approved prior to the date of travel. Reimbursement for expenses will not be made if travel is undertaken prior to receiving written approval.

All requests should be thoroughly reviewed at the departmental level before submission to the Graduate School. This review should include an assessment of the quality of the research to be presented, the stature of the organization to which the presentation will be made, and review of the student's academic record to ensure that he/she meets all of the criteria cited. Each department's request(s) for each semester must be received in the

Graduate School's business office as a group. Requests must be submitted according to the following schedule:

#### Travel Dates Request Deadline

6/25 - 9/30 6/20  
10/1 - 12/31 9/15  
1/1 - 3/31 12/15  
4/1 - 6/24 3/15

The amount of each award will be based on such factors as prevailing costs at the meeting site, cost of travel, whether the meeting is national or regional, and the availability of funds. Students should be prepared to receive an award of less than the total cost of travel. No student will be reimbursed more than the actual cost of the trip.

#### University funds to support graduate student travel: international meetings

The Office of the Vice President for Research has limited funds to assist graduate students when traveling to present papers at international professional conferences. Because of limitations on resources, travel funds will be primarily for doctoral students who are at advanced stages in their graduate programs and are presenting results of their dissertation research findings. If travel is to attend an international conference (outside of North America), requests for assistance should be sent to the Office of the Vice President for Research. If the conference is to be held within North America, requests for travel assistance should be sent to the dean of the Graduate School (see above).

Forms for this purpose are available from the Office of the Vice President for Research (<http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/rpph/forms/foreigntravel.pdf>). The request must be endorsed by the student's major professor and be accompanied by a copy of the invitation to participate in the conference. Each request will be evaluated in terms of its own merit and in accordance with the guidelines for foreign travel support. Students seeking travel assistance must be properly registered during the semester in which the request is submitted and for the semester for which the trip is scheduled. Assistance will not be granted in those instances where travel was undertaken prior to receiving written approval from the Office of the Vice President for Research.

#### Professional association funds to support graduate student travel

Many professional associations (ASM, AAVP, ASP, etc...) also actively support graduate student travel to their meetings in order to foster the development of junior colleagues. Depending on the means of a given association, support can range anywhere from reduced or waived registration fees to matching funds to reimbursement of all travel costs. Ask faculty who are active members of the association sponsoring the meeting you would like to attend, or contact the association directly, to find out about the programs they have in place to support

student travel. Be sure to contact them well ahead of the meeting (6 months out is not too early!) so that you'll have plenty of time to find out the information, prepare a competitive application, and meet their deadlines.

Best of luck as you pursue travel funding so that you may present your research. LJF

Last updated February 2005 by JWZ