

Students can obtain financial support for their doctoral study in several ways:

### **Research Assistantships**

There are several kind of research assistantships: a) Merit Assistantships, which come through the university; b) research assistantships in which the student works for pay on a grant or contract; and c) assistantships provided by the program from school or program funds, for example, from endowed funds. Students may receive funding from more than one source.

### **Guidelines for Research Assistants**

Research assistantships, in which a student works under a faculty member's direction and supervision in various research related tasks, are one means by which we can help prepare students for careers of research performance and productivity. For this reason, we recommend that all doctoral students in social work have opportunities to serve as research assistants. The following guidelines are recommended to help inform the design and implementation of these opportunities.

1. The primary intent of the research assistantship is educational, supporting the development of research scholars who are capable of producing and disseminating knowledge for the profession and the field of social welfare.
2. All research assistantships, both paid and unpaid, represent voluntary relationships on the part of both faculty members and students.
3. If either the faculty member or the student feels that the assistantship is not meeting his or her respective needs, they should first try to deal with this with one another; if unable to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement, they should then consult with the student's adviser; if still unable to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement, they should then consult with the doctoral chair; if all else fails they should ask the Dean to help in reaching a solution.
4. With the approval of their adviser and committee, students may receive academic credit for work performed under a faculty member's supervision as an unpaid research assistant. This work may qualify for credit as a research practicum if it meets the criteria for the research practicum.
5. Under most circumstances, students will not receive academic credit for work performed as a paid research assistant.
6. Although both full time students (registered for 9 or more hours of academic credit) and part time students (registered for less than 9 hours of academic credit) may qualify to serve as either paid or unpaid research assistants, priority for paid assistantships will be given to full time students.
7. In order for students to give priority to their academic program of study, it is recommended that all assistantships be limited to no more than 20 hours per week during the academic year. Students who receive paid assistantships through funds from the Graduate School or from the pool of discretionary resources available within the School of Social Work will be limited to 15 hours per week for first year students and 20 work hours per week for other students during the academic year unless approved by the student's adviser and committee. Faculty who are funding first year assistantships are urged to limit the actual work to 15 hours per week, if it is at all possible.
8. Flexibility of hours to accommodate time crunches in either the student's coursework or the research project will be at the discretion of the student, but should be worked out with his/her research supervisor. While any one month may require more or less than the allotted number of work hours, at the end of the semester, the total number of hours worked shall not average more than 20 (or 15 in the case of first year students) hours per week for the total number of weeks of the semester.
9. Students are responsible for keeping their advisers and the Doctoral Chair informed of their involvement as either paid or unpaid research assistants. Advisers and students are encouraged to examine together how research assistantships fit or can be made to fit with the student's educational and career objectives.
10. Before beginning their work together, the research supervisor will provide the student with a written contract that states the student's responsibilities, sources of funding, how much the student is to be paid, and the expected working hours.

Faculty members within the School of Social Work who wish to request a research assistant and/or who wish to receive financial assistance from school or university funds to help cover the cost of employment will, at the time it is requested, submit their proposal for the assistantship to the Doctoral Chair. Information requested includes the required work activities;

the educational benefits of these activities in helping to prepare the student for a career of research performance and productivity in social work; the number of work hours required per week during the academic year; the duration of the assignment, and if the assignment involves more than one year, plans to continue support for the student and/or to help the student apply for support; the availability of funds in the present academic year, if any, to provide financial support for the student; and plans for supervision and direction of the student's work. The chair of the doctoral program will work with faculty members to try to make a good match with prospective students, and students will be encouraged to make appointments with faculty members to discuss proposed research assistantships.

**Research Assistantship:**

Nature of the tasks	Geared to the student's learning needs to the degree possible, and to the demands of the project.
Flexibility of hours	Constrained by the academic schedule
Maximum number of hours expected	15-16 hours for first year student; 20 hours for advanced students taking full course load
Level of payment	\$18,000 for first year, with \$250 added for each additional year in the program, up to \$750 for fourth-year-plus students
How pay allocated	Automatic deposit
Time sheets	Only if requested by faculty mentor
Health insurance	The funding source for the doctoral student will be charged for the premium

**Seeking Outside Funding**

There are programs to support doctoral study and dissertation research. As the student develops his/her dissertation topic, s/he should be working as well on a proposal to get support for carrying out this research, if s/he will not have funding as part of a grant or contract.

Carolina Social Work Doctoral Students have successfully competed for support from the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Association of Social Workers, the Council on Social Work Education, and university competitive research grants.

In addition to the Doctoral Program Office and individual faculty members, the University Office of Research Services will assist students to locate potential sources of funding.

**Contract Teaching**

Students with teaching experience, and those who have completed the Teaching Practicum and Teaching Seminar, may be hired as contract faculty to teach masters level courses, under faculty supervision. This arrangement provides you the experience to develop teaching skills, helping you to compete for academic positions when you complete the Ph.D.