

# Chapter 3

## Admissions

### Contents

Chapter 3.....	1
Admissions.....	1
A. Overview of DGS and Graduate School Responsibilities .....	2
B. Slate.....	2
C. Application and Supporting Materials .....	3
D. Application Deadlines.....	6
E. Processing of Applications in the Graduate Admissions Office.....	7
F. Departmental Review and Decision Recommendations.....	8
G. Graduate School Processing of Recommended Decisions .....	9
H. Required GRE/GPA for Admission to The Graduate School.....	10
I. Non-Degree Admission .....	11
J. Student Response to an Offer of Admission.....	12
K. Steps to Matriculation .....	13
L. Information for Admitted Students.....	14
MASTER’S NO AWARD POSSIBLE LETTER (TEMPLATE).....	16
MASTER’S DEPARTMENT NOTIFIES OF AWARD LETTER (TEMPLATE) .....	17
MASTER’S NO MENTION OF AWARD LETTER (TEMPLATE).....	18
MASTER’S EXTERNAL FUNDING LETTER (TEMPLATE).....	19
PHD EXTERNAL FUNDING LETTER (TEMPLATE).....	21
PHD RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP LETTER (TEMPLATE).....	23
PHD STANDARD FELLOWSHIP LETTER (TEMPLATE) .....	25
PHD TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP LETTER (TEMPLATE) .....	27
PHD DEPARTMENT NOTIFIES OF SERVICE LETTER (TEMPLATE).....	29
DENY LETTER (SAMPLE) .....	31
DENY FROM WAITLIST LETTER (SAMPLE).....	32
WAITLIST LETTER (SAMPLE) .....	33
DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS LETTER INSTRUCTIONS & TEMPLATE.....	34

## A. Overview of DGS and Graduate School Responsibilities

The process of admitting students for graduate study is a collaborative effort between The Graduate School and the department. The Graduate School sets minimum criteria and standards for admission and determines the documents required to complete an application file. The graduate admissions office bears primary responsibility for:

1. Developing and making available application materials and general information about Graduate School programs.
2. Collecting and processing applications and supporting documents.
3. Making applications available to the department and monitoring the status of applications.
4. Notifying applicants of admission or rejection decisions.
5. Maintaining official data on the applicant pool.

The in-depth review of an applicant's credentials takes place within the department. Each department must develop its own system of reviewing and ranking applications, ensuring equal, fair, and timely consideration of all applicants. As the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), you are responsible for ensuring that: 1) each application receives a timely review; 2) decision recommendations are rendered in an expedient manner; and 3) all applicant information used for review purposes is maintained in a secure and confidential environment with access being granted *only* to those individuals who have official responsibilities related to the admissions process.

This chapter provides a summary of graduate admissions procedures, outlining what you can expect us to do versus what you, as DGS, should do. In addition to reviewing these procedures, you should review the information posted on the Graduate School website (<http://gradschool.duke.edu/>), so that you will better understand the applicant's view of our admissions policies and procedures. The Graduate School's website offers a brief overview of each department, as well as a link to each individual department's website. We ask that you please facilitate our attempts to provide accurate information by making sure that your department's website is kept up to date. **It is particularly important that any information your website provides in reference to Graduate School guidelines be consistent with the information posted on The Graduate School's own website.**

## B. Slate

1. Slate is a cloud-based admissions application and review software for faculty and administrative staff who have access to review Graduate School applications. Applicants log into Slate to work on their application. Once it is submitted, the application will be immediately visible to departments. Applications must be reviewed and decisions must be recommended in Slate. Ultimately, applicants will view their final decision letters and financial aid awards (if any) in their Slate applicant portal.
2. To request access to Slate, please contact Chris Kizer, Slate Operations Manager, at [chris.kizer@duke.edu](mailto:chris.kizer@duke.edu). He will work with SISS to assist you in setting up your Slate account, and in providing any training you may require. Only SISS can grant access to Slate. Graduate Admissions simply facilitates the process for you.

### 3. Common Technical Issues:

- a. Slate is only compatible with modern web browsers. **Please be sure you are using a recent version of Chrome, Firefox, or Safari to log into Slate. Internet Explorer and Edge users will encounter bugs while navigating the website.**
- b. For all other technical issues, contact the [OIT Helpdesk](#).

## C. Application and Supporting Materials



### **Things to Note:**

*This link takes the applicant to the application instructions, including a link to the online application: [Graduate School Application Instructions](#)*

The graduate admissions office requires self-contained applications. Applicants must upload all application documents prior to application submission (with the exception of official GRE and TOEFL/IELTS scores, which are sent directly to The Graduate School from the appropriate testing agency). Except in the case of official test scores, applicants are instructed not to mail any application documents to The Graduate School. If The Graduate School extends an offer of admission, the graduate admissions office will let the applicant know what documents should be mailed to The Graduate School. Please do not direct applicants to mail any application documents to The Graduate School unless an offer of admission has been made. In exceptional cases where the mailing of application documents during the review process is deemed necessary, the graduate admissions office will contact the applicant directly to request the documents.

If any supporting documents are mailed directly to your office, bring them (with envelopes attached, as the envelopes help us determine whether items are official/confidential) to the graduate admissions office. We will add the documents to the applicant's record in Slate. ***Please do not send application documents through Campus Mail.*** Application materials often contain confidential information, and lost documents may be difficult to replace. Please bear the following points in mind:

1. All applications are submitted online.
2. The requirements for a complete application are as follows:
  - a. **Transcripts:** Essential to the review of the application are **unofficial transcripts** from any institution where the applicant earned (or will earn) a degree, studied for one semester or more, earned 12 or more hours of credit, or took courses that relate to the applicant's graduate study interests. The applicant is required to upload scanned copies of transcripts from each institution listed in the application. The applicant is also required to make certain all uploaded transcripts are legible. If you notice that a transcript is missing, illegible, or not accompanied by an English translation (if needed), contact the graduate admissions office and we will send the applicant an email requesting the missing information. This communication will

appear in the candidate's timeline record in Slate. Once the missing documentation is received, it will be added to the applicant's file.

- b. Statement of Purpose and Resume/CV:** Each applicant must upload a **Statement of Purpose** indicating purposes and objectives in undertaking graduate study, special interests and plans, and strengths and weaknesses in the chosen field of study. A resume or CV is also required. If you notice that the Statement of Purpose or the resume/CV is missing or illegible, contact the graduate admissions office and we will email the applicant to request another copy. This communication will appear in the candidate's timeline record in Slate. Once the missing item is received, it will be added to the applicant's file.
- c. Letters of Recommendation:** Three official **letters of recommendation** are required for each application. The letters should come from persons best qualified to evaluate the applicant's academic potential. At least two of the letters should come from evaluators in the applicant's chosen field of study. Letters of recommendation must be submitted electronically through the online recommendation system (part of the online application system). An email containing instructions for submitting the evaluation is sent to each recommender. The recommendations automatically attach to an applicant's file as they are received.
- d. GRE Scores:** The Graduate School requires Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general test scores from applicants to most programs. In addition to self-reporting scores, the applicant must also request that ETS send official GRE scores to institution code 5156 (no departmental code is needed). Scores must not be more than five years old. While self-reported scores may suffice for departmental review purposes, official scores must be received before admission can be offered. **Note: For the 2022-23 cycle, many programs have waived the GRE test score requirement. A complete list is visible at <https://gradschool.duke.edu/admissions/apply/gre-scores>**

Applicants to any programs listed as "GRE Optional" on our webpage may submit GRE scores if they feel the scores enhance their application.

**Alternate test requirement available:**

- Bioethics & Science Policy (MA): Applicants may provide MCAT scores instead.
- Bioethics & Science Policy (JD/MA): Applicants may provide LSAT scores instead.
- Business Administration (Ph.D.): Applicants may provide GMAT scores instead.
- Global Health (MS): Applicants may provide MCAT scores instead.
- Population Health Sciences (MS): Applicants may provide MCAT scores instead.

Applicants who chose to submit MCAT scores will need to provide the AAMC ID and the Verification Code in the application. If the applicant is recommended for admission, the graduate admissions office will use this information to verify the self-reported scores and record them as official.

- e. **TOEFL or IELTS:** Scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (**TOEFL**) or the International English Language Testing System (**IELTS**) are required of any applicant whose first language is not English. The applicant must self-report the TOEFL or IELTS scores (or state a future TOEFL or IELTS exam date) in the application.
  - i. The **TOEFL** is administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS). In addition to self-reporting scores, applicants must also request that ETS send official scores to institution code 5156 (a departmental code is not needed). The Graduate School generally seeks total scores no less than 90 for the Internet-based TOEFL.
  - ii. The **IELTS** is administered by Cambridge ESOL, British Council, and IDP: IELTS Australia. More information about the test is available at [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org). In addition to self-reporting scores, applicants must request that official IELTS score reports be sent directly to the graduate admissions office. The Graduate School generally seeks total scores no less than 7.0 for the IELTS.
  - iii. For the 2022-23 cycle, The Graduate School will continue to also accept Duolingo English Test examination results as an alternative to TOEFL and IELTS examinations to accommodate applicants facing test schedule disruptions caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Graduate School generally seeks total scores no less than 125 for Duolingo.
  - iv. Scores for either test must not be more than two years old, and an official score report must be sent to the graduate admissions office directly from the testing agency. Personal copies are not acceptable, nor are “attested” or notarized copies.
- f. **Supporting Documents:** The applicant may use the **Additional Information** section of the application to upload any miscellaneous items the applicant feels should be reviewed by the department.
- g. **Application Fee:** The application fee is \$95. **No application is processed without the application fee.** Applicants pay the application fee by credit card at the time of application submission.
- h. **Ph.D. Degree Holders:** Applicants holding Ph.D. degrees or their equivalent are generally not eligible for admission to Duke University for a second Ph.D. The Dean of The Graduate School will consider exceptions only if the department or program demonstrates that the proposed field of study is unrelated to the field of the first Ph.D., and that the educational experience afforded by the proposed doctoral field is essential for the applicant’s long-term research objectives. Please note that applicants who have not yet had the opportunity to benefit from a doctoral education will be prioritized in the admissions and financial aid process.



## What about an applicant who cannot afford to pay the fee? Does The Graduate School ever waive application fees?

For the 2022-23 cycle, The Graduate School is piloting the formalization of a centralized application fee waiver program which will waive the \$95 fee for eligible applicants on a first come, first served basis. See details on our website here:

<https://gradschool.duke.edu/admissions/application-instructions/application-fee>

*If an applicant contacts you to request a fee waiver prior to or by the appropriate deadline, instruct them to follow the directions on the new webpage above.*

3. Within three business days of application submission, the applicant will receive an email with instructions on how to view the status of the application. **The completion of the application file is the applicant's responsibility.**
4. During the regular admissions season, submitted applications will be made available to departments for review once the application fee has been paid. If an applicant claims to have already submitted an application and you do not see the applicant's record in Bin 1 within the Department Workflow in Slate, please contact your assigned Department Specialist in the graduate admissions office.

### D. Application Deadlines

Any application submitted before or on the appropriate deadline date will be given full consideration. Programs may allow individuals with extenuating circumstances to submit after the program's application deadline. Please notify Scott Andrews (<mailto:scott.andrews@duke.edu>) or Chris Kizer (<mailto:chris.kizer@duke.edu>) of any applicants for whom you wish to extend your deadline.

#### 1. Spring Semester:

**October 3** – The deadline date for submission of all applications for the spring semester. No spring applications will be accepted after this date.

#### 2. For the Fall Semester:

Deadlines vary by program. Please check the Admissions website for details:

<https://gradschool.duke.edu/admissions/application-deadlines>

Also reference our Admissions Calendar in our Box folder [here](#)

**March 10** - This is the date by which **all Ph.D. programs** will close.

**April 15** - No new acceptance letters or financial aid awards can be processed after this date without special permission from the Dean of The Graduate School.

**June 1** - This is the date after which no new applications will be processed.



### What happens to late applications?

*An applicant will not be able to start or submit an application once the program's application deadline has closed. If a program wishes to allow a late application, the DGS must contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Admissions.*

## E. Processing of Applications in the Graduate Admissions Office

Once an applicant submits the application, the application is sent directly to Bin 1 of the departmental workflow within Slate for review. To prevent any delay in departmental access to applications, all submitted applications, regardless of their fulfillment of the requirements, are accessible to the department at the time of submission. Therefore, it is possible that your department will be reviewing applications with illegible or missing transcripts, less than the required number of recommendations, and/or no official standardized test scores.



### How long does it take for applications to be processed?

*During the regular admissions season, newly submitted applications are sent directly to Bin 1 of the department workflow for review. If an applicant claims to have already submitted the application and you do not see the application record in Bin 1, please wait one business day before contacting your assigned Department Specialist in the graduate admissions office.*

1. **Illegible Documents:** Occasionally, some part of the application may be illegible or missing.
  - a. If you notice that an item is missing or illegible, please notify your Department Specialist. A communication will be sent to the applicant requesting an acceptable document.
2. **Schools Not Listed:** In the application instructions, applicants are asked to locate each institution for which they will be uploading a transcript. In the event that an applicant is unable to locate an institution in our database, the graduate admissions office instructs the applicant to enter it as "School Not Listed". A graduate admissions staff member reviews each School Not Listed entry and updates the database with the school name.
3. **GPA:** Each applicant must self-report a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (UGPA) on a 4.0 scale.
  - a. If an applicant is unable to convert the UGPA to a 4.0 scale or leaves the UGPA section of the application blank, a Department Specialist will perform the UGPA calculation.
  - b. **All self-reported UGPAs that do fall within the 4.0 scale are NOT checked by a Department Specialist unless and until the department recommends the applicant for admission.**
  - c. **If you have questions about a self-reported UGPA, please ask your Department Specialist to recalculate the UGPA.**

## F. Departmental Review and Decision Recommendations



### IMPORTANT:

*The department must not make a commitment to an applicant, verbal or written, concerning admission OR financial award until the recommendation for admission has been approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Admissions.*

1. **Departmental Review:** Each department determines its own procedures for reviewing applications. You, the DGS, are responsible for ensuring the following during the review process:
  - a. All applicant information used for review purposes is maintained in a secure and confidential environment with access granted only to those individuals who have official responsibilities related to the admissions process. Duke considers Box.com to be a secure environment for sharing information and provides free Duke Box accounts to all employees: <https://duke.account.box.com/login>



### Is there a policy about who can review applications?

See the “[Policy on Confidentiality of Graduate Student Files](#)” on the website at: [Graduate School Application Data Security Policy](#). **Currently enrolled graduate students are strictly prohibited from accessing any of the data mentioned in the confidentiality policy, whether the data pertains to fellow students or to applicants.**

- b. All applications are reviewed, and appropriate and fair treatment is given to every applicant. It is up to you to ensure that all matters related to the consideration of applicants are handled equitably and, where necessary, are documented.



### How can a department switch an application to another department?

*Due to the interdisciplinary nature of much of the research in departments and programs, it sometimes happens that an application file starts out in one department before the faculty reviewers realize that it is more appropriate for the file to be reviewed by another department. When an application file is transferred to another department after **either** of the programs’ application deadlines, **The Graduate School must have documentation of a) the applicant’s agreement to the change (an email message is acceptable), b) an email from the DGS of the new department stating a willingness to review the application, and c) confirmation from the DGS of the department to which the applicant originally applied stating their confirmed intention to release the application to the new department.** Contact your Department Specialist for more information.*

- c. Relevant information communicated by the applicant to the department is relayed to your assigned Department Specialist so that the applicant’s file can be updated.



### What do I do if an applicant asks to withdraw before a decision is made?

*Please forward the applicant correspondence to your assigned Department Specialist. The graduate admissions office will add the email to the applicant’s file*

*for documentation purposes and take the appropriate steps to withdraw the applicant.*

- d. Decisions are submitted in a timely fashion in Slate for every applicant who applies to your department.



**Is there a deadline by which the department needs to make decisions?**

**The Graduate School requires that all Ph.D. applicants receive notification of the status of their files no later than two weeks before April 15.** Departments should submit their decision recommendations by March 29 to allow time for the graduate admissions office to send out decision letters a full two weeks prior to April 15. Many applicants are well aware of the April 15 agreement stated in the Council of Graduate Schools “Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants” (<http://cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution>).

The earliest decisions are usually made in January, with the review process continuing for most departments into February and early March. Whatever the department's schedule, bear in mind that it is crucial that applicants be informed of admission decisions as soon as possible.

2. **Decision Recommendations:** Only the DGS in each department has the security access in Slate to submit recommended decisions to the graduate admissions office. Slate allows for the submission of one of three recommended decisions: Recommend Deny, Recommend Waitlist, or Recommend Admit.

## **G. Graduate School Processing of Recommended Decisions**

Submitted decisions will trigger a series of actions on the application in Slate. After one business day, The Graduate School will perform several final checks on the applications. **These checks must be completed before the recommended decision can be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Admissions.**

1. **Recommend Deny:** After a Recommend Deny decision is registered for an applicant, the graduate admissions office notifies the denied applicant that a decision has been made and asks the applicant to log into their Slate Applicant Portal to view the decision.



**Does it matter whether or not the department keeps track of deny reasons?**

*Yes. An applicant who has been denied admission will often contact the graduate admissions office requesting an explanation. In such situations, the graduate admissions office tells the applicant to contact the department directly to determine the reason for the denial.*

2. **Recommend Waitlist:** After a Recommend Waitlist decision is registered for an applicant, the graduate admissions office notifies the waitlisted applicant that a decision has been made and asks the applicant to log into their Slate Applicant Portal to view the decision. The applicant can choose to withdraw from the waiting list from their

Applicant Portal. Unless the applicant withdraws from the waiting list, the DGS will be required to enter a final decision for the waitlisted applicant in Slate at a later date.

3. **Recommend Admit:** After a Recommend Admit decision is registered for an applicant, an Admissions Specialist reviews the applicant's file to ensure that all Graduate School admissions requirements have been fulfilled and that all necessary financial award processing (where applicable) has been completed. Once this review is complete, the applicant's file is sent to the Associate Dean for Graduate Admissions for approval.



**IMPORTANT:**

*If the department sends a financial award letter to an applicant, the department should also send a copy of this letter (signed or unsigned) to the graduate admissions office so that this correspondence can be added to the applicant's Slate file. Please email the letter to [grad-admissions-center@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions-center@duke.edu).*

- a. During this process, it may be determined that the applicant's file requires an additional review by either the Associate Dean for Graduate Admissions or the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs before the decision is approved.
- b. If the Associate Dean for Graduate Admissions approves the DGS's decision recommendation, the graduate admissions office notifies the applicant that a decision has been made and asks the applicant to log into their Slate Applicant Portal to view the decision. The applicant can accept or decline their offer of admission from their Applicant Portal until April 15 or 15 days after the decision notification, whichever is later. The DGS and the DGSA can easily see when an applicant has received his/her decision letter by logging into Slate. The letter will be visible on the Timeline and also in the Departmental Workflow.

**Departmental Service Requirements Letter:** Each admitted Ph.D. applicant should receive a departmental service requirements letter within two weeks of being admitted. A template for the letter is included at the end of this section of the DGS manual.

## H. Required GRE/GPA for Admission to The Graduate School

The Graduate School does not specify a strict cut-off point for GRE scores or undergraduate grade point averages. While we obviously seek to admit above-average students, we realize that scores and grades do not provide a complete picture of an applicant.

While GRE scores are often a controversial subject, most departments continue to find them a useful tool for making comparisons among applicants. In an effort to ensure that scores are used appropriately, the GRE Board sets usage policies and publishes guidelines that are distributed to test takers as well as score users. For more information, view the ETS guidelines at <http://www.ets.org/gre/institutions/scores/guidelines>. Only if we follow the guidelines established by the GRE Board can we expect their support if an admission decision is ever legally challenged. It is most important to remember that **GRE scores are only one component of an applicant's file. While useful, they should never be considered apart from all available credentials, and they should never be the sole basis**

**for rejecting or accepting an applicant.** The Graduate School's approach to the GRE can best be described as vigilant yet flexible; we keep a watchful eye on our school-wide averages but review each applicant's file in a holistic manner, as we expect departments to do.

The GRE test reports the Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning measures **on a 130 – 170 score scale in 1-point increments**. A sample pdf of the score report is available here: [http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/institution\\_score\\_report.pdf](http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/institution_score_report.pdf).

## **I. Non-Degree Admission**

In the online application, applicants very few options to apply for non-degree admission. There are two types of non-degree applicants: a) applicants to the Office of Continuing Studies and b) international exchange students. In the rare case that an applicant should be admitted as a non-degree student within your department, please contact the Graduate School Admissions office to discuss next steps.

- 1. Non-Degree Applicants:** Applicants who wish to undertake non-degree graduate work at Duke University must be formally admitted to The Graduate School by the Admissions Dean. Non-degree admission is granted in two different categories: (1) admission as a non-degree student through an affiliated international exchange institution with a specific department, or (2) admission through the Office of Continuing Studies (CED) as a non-degree student without department affiliation.
  - a.** Prerequisites for admission include a four-year U.S. bachelor's degree (or the equivalent) from a regionally accredited institution, unofficial transcripts from each institution listed in the application, a statement of purpose, and two official letters of recommendation. Applicants who do not speak English as a first language must also submit official TOEFL or IELTS scores.
  - b.** Duke graduate course credits earned by a non-degree student before the student is granted full admission to The Graduate School may be transferred to a graduate degree program if: (1) the action is recommended by the student's DGS and approved by the Dean; (2) the coursework is not more than two years old; (3) the credit awarded does not exceed one full-time semester; and (4) all coursework received grades of B or higher. This is considered retroactive credit, not a transfer of credit. More information about retroactive credits can be found on The Graduate School website.
- 2. International Exchange Applicants:** The Graduate School has entered into a number of international exchange program agreements to promote international collaboration in the exchange of educational, intellectual, and cultural ideas. Applicants admitted to these programs are pre-screened and allowed one year of non-degree study.
  - a.** Prerequisites for admission include a four-year U.S. bachelor's degree (or the equivalent) from a regionally accredited institution, unofficial transcripts from each

institution listed in the application, a statement of purpose, and two official letters of recommendation. Applicants who do not speak English as a first language must also submit official TOEFL or IELTS scores.

- b. Each student's tuition and stipend costs are covered according to the terms of Duke's agreement with the host institution. There are no monetary costs to the department. In addition to being recommended for admission by the DGS, the exchange student must be admitted to The Graduate School through the regular channels.

## J. Student Response to an Offer of Admission

Once a candidate accepts or declines an offer of admission, their record in Slate will update accordingly. The department staff should notify The Graduate School whenever they receive an applicant's response to an offer of admission that is not reflected in Slate and should ask the applicant to officially record the response by entering the decision through the Applicant Portal in Slate

1. **Decision Deadlines:** The deadline for officially accepting the offer of admission is April 15 or two weeks from the receipt of the admission notification, whichever is later.
  - a. Duke University is a signatory of the Council of Graduate Schools resolution regarding student obligation for accepting financial support prior to April 15. Under the resolution, students are under no obligation to respond to offers prior to April 15.
  - b. If the given deadline passes, and the graduate admissions office has not heard from the applicant, the applicant will be administratively withdrawn.
2. **If the applicant *declines*:** Applicants are asked to officially decline offers of admission from their Slate Applicant Portal. The graduate admissions office will track decline reasons and make them available in the yearly report. Application information will be stored by The Graduate School for one year, should the applicant decide to reapply.
3. **If the applicant *accepts*:** Applicants are asked to officially accept offers of admission using their Slate Applicant Portal. **The matriculation process cannot start until the student has accepted the offer online.**



### **What if an applicant wants to defer to a future term?**

*All deferral requests must begin at the department level, with the applicant emailing their request with specific rationale. If the DGS supports an applicant's deferral request, then the DGS must submit the request through our form in Slate (guide provided in our Box folder [here](#)). The DGS's request must state a legitimate reason for the deferral and the length of the requested deferral period (no more than one year from the admission term). This request will be reviewed and decisioned by the Associate Dean for Admissions. **Deferrals are seldom granted and most likely the applicant will need to reapply.** The Graduate School defers*

the applicant's accepted offer and not their admission offer. Valid reasons for a deferral include health issues, visa issues beyond the student's control, or military service. The official steps for a deferral request can be found on our webpage [here](#).

## K. Steps to Matriculation

After the applicant accepts the admission offer online, the matriculation process proceeds as follows:

1. The graduate admissions office sends the student an email requesting **official, confidential transcripts** from each institution listed in the online application. Once the official transcripts are received, an Admissions Specialist compares the grades and GPAs listed in the official transcripts to those listed in the student's unofficial transcripts. The graduate admissions office also checks the official transcripts to confirm that any degrees the student was expected to receive have been conferred.



### **IMPORTANT:**

*The Graduate School reserves the right to rescind any offer of admission if any discrepancies are found between the unofficial transcripts uploaded to the application and the official transcripts received from the student's educational institutions. If proof of the awarding of the undergraduate degree is not on file by mid-semester of the student's first enrollment term, registration for the following term will be blocked.*

2. A Department Specialist guides incoming students who are not U.S. citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents through the **visa process**.
  - a. Each applicant receives an email with instructions for submitting a Visa Services web form request for either an I-20 form (for an F-1 Student visa) or a DS-2019 form (for a J-1 Visiting Scholar visa).
  - b. After submitting the web form, the student is asked to send the following documents directly to The Graduate School:
    - i. Visa Services web form Signature Page
    - ii. photocopy of passport
    - iii. copies of previous visas (if applicable)
    - iv. proof of funding\* (often the Duke admit/award letter)

\*U.S. immigration law requires that Duke University have documented evidence that a student has adequate financial resources to cover the estimated cost of attendance as determined by the Office of Financial Aid for one year. A self-funded student must submit an official bank statement demonstrating an adequate balance. If a student is sponsored by a parent or organization, he or she must also submit a signed sponsor's statement.



## How does Duke's financial support of an international student impact the visa process?

*If an international student will be receiving financial support from Duke that is not reflected in the admission letter sent by The Graduate School, please notify the graduate admissions office of this fact as soon as possible so that the student's visa request can be processed. Questions concerning financial support should be directed to The Graduate School's Office of Financial Aid.*

3. After all required documentation has been received, a graduate admissions staff member will matriculate the student. In the case of U.S. students, matriculation occurs upon receipt of all required official transcripts. In the case of international students, matriculation occurs upon receipt of required visa documentation and official transcripts.

### L. Information for Admitted Students

The admission letter directs newly admitted students to their Slate Applicant Portal. Once the student has accepted their offer, their Portal will populate with the graduate student checklist also available on our website, which will help admitted students track any necessary paperwork they must complete before the beginning of their program.

<http://gradschool.duke.edu/admissions/admitted-students>) *The graduate admissions office does not send any new student information through the mail.*

1. **NetID:** OIT distributes NetIDs to incoming students via email upon matriculation. Generally speaking, the activation email reaches the student within three business days. The student is then able to activate their NetID and email account. The activation email is re-sent every two weeks until the NetID is activated. If a matriculated student has not received the email, ask the student to contact the OIT help desk.
2. **DukeCard:** All Duke students are expgro.
3. **Health Requirements**
  - a. **Proof of Immunization:** North Carolina law requires all students enrolled in colleges or universities in this state to present proof of certain required immunizations on or before the first day of matriculation. To access the immunization form, an admitted student will need a Duke NetID and password. Students' questions about immunization requirements should be directed to Student Health ([Student Health Immunization Compliance](#)).
  - b. **Health Insurance:** Information concerning health insurance, including details about plan coverage, contact information, claims submission, and dependent coverage is available from Student Health ([Student Affairs Health Insurance](#)).

4. **Housing:** A limited amount of on-campus housing is available for first-year non-U.S. citizen grad students. A wide variety of housing is available off campus. Students should consult the [Graduate and Professional Student housing](#) website for details on the various types of housing available both on and off campus.
5. **Orientation:** Orientation Week is typically held the last full week of August. The presence of ALL newly admitted graduate students is strongly encouraged at Graduate Student Orientation. More information about Graduate School orientation events can be found at [Graduate School Orientation Week](#).
6. **English Language Placement Exams:** The Graduate School requires that students whose first language is not English demonstrate proficiency in academic English by taking [oral and written exams](#) upon their arrival at Duke. The exams are typically given each semester in the week prior to the beginning of classes, and students must arrive at Duke in time to take them. The Pratt School of Engineering manages the English language placement for all students attending Pratt.

Non-degree students are exempt from the exam requirements. Exemption requests for other students are handled on an individual basis according to the criteria listed on the [EIS website](#). Questions can be directed to Brad Teague, EIS Assistant Dean/Director at [brad.teague@duke.edu](mailto:brad.teague@duke.edu).

## MASTER'S NO AWARD POSSIBLE LETTER (TEMPLATE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} {%-DEGREE} program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

Due to limited departmental funding, we are unable to offer you a Duke scholarship for pursuit of this degree. Please know that this lack of funding in no way reflects our view of your credentials or your ability to succeed as a master's student. If you require funding for your studies, we encourage you to research master's funding opportunities online (The Graduate School's [Find Funding page](#) is a good place to start) and to apply for any relevant opportunities as early as possible.

Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, cost of attendance, and other important matters can be found online at our [admitted student website](#) and our [financial aid website](#).

This offer of admission is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a master's degree program is a significant personal and professional milestone. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

# MASTER'S DEPARTMENT NOTIFIES OF AWARD LETTER (TEMPLATE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} {DEGREE} program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

Details of your financial support package will be sent to you directly by your admitting department or program under separate cover. Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, cost of attendance, and other important matters can be found online at our [admitted students website](#) and our [financial aid website](#).

In October 2014, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) renewed the Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants, which outlines student rights and obligations concerning acceptance of offers of financial support. A copy of this resolution can be accessed on the [CGS website](#).

This offer of admission is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a master's degree program is a significant personal and professional milestone. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

**MASTER'S NO MENTION OF AWARD LETTER**  
**(TEMPLATE)**



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} {DEGREE} program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, cost of attendance, and other important matters can be found online at our [admitted student website](#) and our [financial aid website](#).

This offer of admission is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a master's degree program is a significant personal and professional milestone. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## MASTER'S EXTERNAL FUNDING LETTER (TEMPLATE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} {DEGREE} program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

I understand that you have applied for or have been awarded an external fellowship and congratulate you on that as well. If you have been awarded an external fellowship, please email a copy of your award letter to [grad-finaid@duke.edu](mailto:grad-finaid@duke.edu) as soon as possible.

Details of your financial support package will be sent to you directly by your admitting department or program under separate cover. Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, cost of attendance, and other important matters can be found online at our [admitted student website](#) and our [financial aid website](#).

In October 2019, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) renewed the Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants, which outlines student rights and obligations concerning acceptance of offers of financial support. A copy of this resolution can be accessed on the [CGS website](#).

This offer of admission is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a master's degree program is a significant personal and professional milestone. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## PHD EXTERNAL FUNDING LETTER (TEMPLATE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} Ph.D. program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

I understand that you have applied for or have been awarded an external fellowship and congratulate you on that as well. If you have been awarded an external fellowship, please email a copy of your award letter to [grad-finaid@duke.edu](mailto:grad-finaid@duke.edu) as soon as possible. Be assured that our financial aid office will work with your external funding source to ensure that you receive a full tuition scholarship and a fellowship package that is at or above the level of our standard departmental award. Please notify [grad-finaid@duke.edu](mailto:grad-finaid@duke.edu) with the status of your external fellowship.

Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, and other important matters can be found [online](#). In addition you will have access to the many [professional development programs](#) and [student support services](#) of The Graduate School, all of which are designed to help you succeed here at Duke and beyond.

The Graduate School and your department will ensure that you are supported through at least the fifth year since your matriculation term -- which means you will be provided with the standard departmental stipend and tuition and fees scholarships for those years -- provided that you remain in good academic standing, complete your department's teaching or research training requirements, and are making satisfactory progress toward your degree. Your admitting department will communicate its expectations for teaching and research training with you directly. After the fifth year, you are responsible for tuition and fees, but you will have the opportunity to apply for a sixth-year tuition scholarship from your graduate program if no other funding source is available. You can find more information about our financial support on our [financial aid website](#). [Click here](#) for a full breakdown of the cost of attendance. I also encourage you to speak with your program's director of graduate studies if you have questions about departmental funding.

As a member of the Duke graduate community, we expect you to make a good faith effort to apply for all possible institutional and external scholarships and fellowships available to students in your field, and we commend your current efforts in this regard. Not only do external scholarships and awards support The Graduate School's commitment to provide five consecutive years of full support for all Ph.D. students, they are also a prestigious and valuable acknowledgement of your research and scholarship. If you are successful in future competitions for an external scholarship or fellowship that can be used for your first five years of

study, we expect that you will accept that award in place of Duke's support package and notify us accordingly. To ensure that your acceptance of any external award does not put you at a financial disadvantage, we will supplement the external fellowship, as needed, to bring your support to at least the total amount outlined in the offer of financial support.

Health insurance is required for all Duke students. Dental insurance is not required, but an optional benefit. If you choose to enroll in Duke's student medical insurance plan (Duke SMIP) or the dental insurance plan offered through Dent-Well, The Graduate School will cover the cost of your individual premium through the first six consecutive years. Information on both insurance plans can be found at <https://gradschool.duke.edu/medical-dental>. International students holding F-1 or J-1 visas are required to enroll in the Duke SMIP. Domestic students may choose not to enroll in the Duke plan; however, those who do not enroll must meet the [waiver criteria](#) and provide proof of comparable alternative insurance coverage.

In October 2019, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) renewed the [Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants](#), which outlines student rights and obligations concerning acceptance of offers of financial support. A copy of this resolution can be accessed on the [CGS website](#).

This admission offer is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or delivered by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a Ph.D. program is a significant milestone in your academic career. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

# PHD RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP LETTER

## (TEMPLATE)



{Date}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address1}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} Ph.D. program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

As a student in the program, you will receive a first-year research assistantship that consists of a tuition and fee scholarship, student health and dental insurance coverage, and a stipend. In addition you will have access to the many [professional development programs](#) and [student support services](#) of The Graduate School, all of which are designed to help you succeed here at Duke and beyond.

Details of your first-year financial support package are listed under the Financial Aid tab of your Applicant Portal. Funding after the first year will likely be contingent upon research and/or training requirements. Your admitting department will inform you of any such training requirements within the next five business days. Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, and other important matters can be found [online](#).

The Graduate School and your department will ensure that you are supported through at least the fifth year since your matriculation term -- which means you will be provided with the standard departmental stipend and tuition and fees scholarships for those years -- provided that you remain in good academic standing, complete your department's teaching or research training requirements, and are making satisfactory progress toward your degree. Your admitting department will communicate its expectations for teaching and research training with you directly. After the fifth year, you are responsible for tuition and fees, but you will have the opportunity to apply for a sixth year tuition scholarship from your graduate program if no other funding source is available. You can find more information about our financial support on our [financial aid website](#). [Click here](#) for a full breakdown of the cost of attendance. I also encourage you to speak with your program's director of graduate studies if you have questions about departmental funding.

As a member of the Duke graduate community, we expect you to make a good faith effort to apply for all possible institutional and external scholarships and fellowships available to students in your field. Not only do external scholarships and awards support The Graduate School's commitment to provide five consecutive years of full support for all Ph.D. students, they are also a prestigious and valuable acknowledgement of your research and scholarship. In the event that you are successful in the competition for an external scholarship or fellowship that can be used for your first year of study, we expect that you will accept that award in place of Duke's support

package and notify us accordingly. To ensure that your acceptance of any external award does not put you at a financial disadvantage, we will supplement the external fellowship, as needed, to bring your support to at least the total amount outlined in the offer of financial support.

The tuition and fee scholarship, as well as your individual health and dental insurance premium, will be disbursed directly to your student account. Your stipend will be distributed monthly beginning in August. You should, therefore, plan accordingly for your arrival in August.

Health insurance is required for all Duke students. Dental insurance is not required, but an optional benefit. If you choose to enroll in Duke's student medical insurance plan (Duke SMIP) or the dental insurance plan offered through Dent-Well, The Graduate School will cover the cost of your individual premium through the first six consecutive years. Information on both insurance plans can be found at <https://gradschool.duke.edu/medical-dental>. International students holding F-1 or J-1 visas are required to enroll in the Duke SMIP. Domestic students may choose not to enroll in the Duke plan; however, those who do not enroll must meet the [waiver criteria](#) and provide proof of comparable alternative insurance coverage.

In October 2019, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) renewed the [Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants](#), which outlines student rights and obligations concerning acceptance of offers of financial support. A copy of this resolution can be accessed on the [CGS website](#).

This admission offer is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or delivered by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a Ph.D. program is a significant milestone in your academic career. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## *PHD STANDARD FELLOWSHIP LETTER (TEMPLATE)*



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} Ph.D. program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

As a student in the program, you will receive a first-year financial award that consists of a tuition and fee scholarship, student health and dental insurance coverage, and a fellowship stipend. In addition you will have access to the many [professional development programs](#) and [student support services](#) of The Graduate School, all of which are designed to help you succeed here at Duke and beyond.

Details of your first-year financial support package are listed under the Financial Aid tab of your Applicant Portal. Funding after the first year will likely be contingent upon teaching and research training requirements. Your admitting department will inform you of any such training requirements within the next five business days. Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, and other important matters can be found [online](#).

The Graduate School and your department will ensure that you are supported through at least the fifth year since your matriculation term -- which means you will be provided with the standard departmental stipend and tuition and fees scholarships for those years -- provided that you remain in good academic standing, complete your department's teaching or research training requirements, and are making satisfactory progress toward your degree. Your admitting department will communicate its expectations for teaching and research training with you directly. After the fifth year, you are responsible for tuition and fees, but you will have the opportunity to apply for a sixth year tuition scholarship from your graduate program if no other funding source is available. You can find more information about our financial support on our [financial aid website](#). [Click here](#) for a full breakdown of the cost of attendance. I also encourage you to speak with your program's director of graduate studies if you have questions about departmental funding.

As a member of the Duke graduate community, we expect you to make a good faith effort to apply for all possible institutional and external scholarships and fellowships available to students in your field. Not only do external scholarships and awards support The Graduate School's commitment to provide five consecutive years of full support for all Ph.D. students, they are also a prestigious and valuable acknowledgement of your research and scholarship. In the event that you are successful in the competition for an external scholarship or fellowship that can be used for your first year of study, we expect that you will accept that award in place of Duke's support package and notify us accordingly. To ensure that your acceptance of any external award does not put you at a

financial disadvantage, we will supplement the external fellowship, as needed, to bring your support to at least the total amount outlined in the offer of financial support.

The tuition and fee scholarship, as well as your individual health and dental insurance premium, will be disbursed directly to your student account. Your stipend will be distributed monthly beginning in August. You should, therefore, plan accordingly for your arrival in August.

Health insurance is required for all Duke students. Dental insurance is not required, but an optional benefit. If you choose to enroll in Duke's student medical insurance plan (Duke SMIP) or the dental insurance plan offered through Dent-Well, The Graduate School will cover the cost of your individual premium through the first six consecutive years. Information on both insurance plans can be found on at <https://gradschool.duke.edu/medical-dental>. International students holding F-1 or J-1 visas are required to enroll in the Duke SMIP. Domestic students may choose not to enroll in the Duke plan; however, those who do not enroll must meet the [waiver criteria](#) and provide proof of comparable alternative insurance coverage.

In October 2019, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) renewed the [Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants](#), which outlines student rights and obligations concerning acceptance of offers of financial support. A copy of this resolution can be accessed on the [CGS website](#).

This admission offer is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or delivered by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a Ph.D. program is a significant milestone in your academic career. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

# PHD TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP LETTER

## (TEMPLATE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} Ph.D. program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

As a student in the program, you will receive a first-year financial award that consists of a tuition and fee scholarship, student health and dental insurance coverage, and a departmental stipend. As part of Ph.D. training, we believe one needs to practice the art of teaching by being a teaching assistant. Your department will provide more information on teaching assistant expectations as well as other particulars specific to your department. In addition to the support outlined above, you will have access to the many [professional development programs](#) and [student support services](#) of The Graduate School, all of which are designed to help you succeed here at Duke and beyond.

Details of your first-year financial support package are listed under the Financial Aid tab of your Applicant Portal. Funding after the first year will likely be contingent upon teaching and/or research requirements. Your admitting department will inform you of any such training requirements within the next five business days. Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, and other important matters can be found [online](#).

The Graduate School and your department will ensure that you are supported through at least the fifth year since your matriculation term -- which means you will be provided with the standard departmental stipend and tuition and fees scholarships for those years -- provided that you remain in good academic standing, complete your department's teaching or research training requirements, and are making satisfactory progress toward your degree. Your admitting department will communicate its expectations for teaching and research training with you directly. After the fifth year, you are responsible for tuition and fees, but you will have the opportunity to apply for a sixth year tuition scholarship from your graduate program if no other funding source is available. You can find more information about our financial support at our [financial aid website](#). [Click here](#) for a full breakdown of the cost of attendance. I also encourage you to speak with your program's director of graduate studies if you have questions about departmental funding.

As a member of the Duke graduate community, we expect you to make a good faith effort to apply for all possible institutional and external scholarships and fellowships available to students in your field. Not only do external scholarships and awards support The Graduate School's commitment to provide five consecutive years of full support for all Ph.D. students, they are also a prestigious and valuable acknowledgement of your research and

scholarship. In the event that you are successful in the competition for an external scholarship or fellowship that can be used for your first year of study, we expect that you will accept that award in place of Duke's support package and notify us accordingly. To ensure that your acceptance of any external award does not put you at a financial disadvantage, we will supplement the external fellowship, as needed, to bring your support to at least the total amount outlined in the offer of financial support.

The tuition and fee scholarship, as well as your individual health and dental insurance premium, will be disbursed directly to your student account. Your stipend will be distributed monthly beginning in August. You should, therefore, plan accordingly for your arrival in August.

Health insurance is required for all Duke students. Dental insurance is not required, but an optional benefit. If you choose to enroll in Duke's student medical insurance plan (Duke SMIP) or the dental insurance plan offered through Dent-Well, The Graduate School will cover the cost of your individual premium through the first six consecutive years. Information on both insurance plans can be found at <https://gradschool.duke.edu/medical-dental>. International students holding F-1 or J-1 visas are required to enroll in the Duke SMIP. Domestic students may choose not to enroll in the Duke plan; however, those who do not enroll must meet the [waiver criteria](#) and provide proof of comparable alternative insurance coverage.

In October 2019, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) renewed the [Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants](#), which outlines student rights and obligations concerning acceptance of offers of financial support. A copy of this resolution can be accessed on the [CGS website](#).

This admission offer is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or delivered by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

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Admission to a Ph.D. program is a significant milestone in your academic career. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## PHD DEPARTMENT NOTIFIES OF SERVICE LETTER (TEMPLATE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted to Duke University's {ACAD\_PLAN} Ph.D. program for the {ADMIT\_TERM} term. Duke University operates with a highly selective admissions policy, and I congratulate you upon this positive decision.

Details of your first-year financial support package are listed under the Financial Aid tab of your Applicant Portal. Information regarding Duke University requirements, course registration, housing, disability services, and other important matters can be found [online](#). In addition you will have access to the many [professional development programs](#) and [student support services](#) of The Graduate School, all of which are designed to help you succeed here at Duke and beyond.

The Graduate School and your department will ensure that you are supported through at least the fifth year since your matriculation term -- which means you will be provided with the standard departmental stipend and tuition and fees scholarships for those years -- provided that you remain in good academic standing, complete your department's teaching or research training requirements, and are making satisfactory progress toward your degree. Your admitting department will communicate its expectations for teaching and research training with you directly. After the fifth year, you are responsible for tuition and fees, but you will have the opportunity to apply for a sixth year tuition scholarship from your graduate program if no other funding source is available. You can find more information about our financial support on our [financial aid website](#). [Click here](#) for a full breakdown of the cost of attendance. I also encourage you to speak with your program's director of graduate studies if you have questions about departmental funding.

As a member of the Duke graduate community, we expect you to make a good faith effort to apply for all possible institutional and external scholarships and fellowships available to students in your field. Not only do external scholarships and awards support The Graduate School's commitment to provide five consecutive years of full support for all Ph.D. students, they are also a prestigious and valuable acknowledgement of your research and scholarship. In the event that you are successful in the competition for an external scholarship or fellowship that can be used for your first year of study, we expect that you will accept that award in place of Duke's support package and notify us accordingly. To ensure that your acceptance of any external award does not put you at a financial disadvantage, we will supplement the external fellowship, as needed, to bring your support to at least the total amount outlined in the offer of financial support.

The tuition and fee scholarship, as well as your individual health and dental insurance premium, will be disbursed directly to your student account. Your stipend will be distributed monthly beginning in August. You should, therefore, plan accordingly for your arrival in August.

Health insurance is required for all Duke students. Dental insurance is not required, but an optional benefit. If you choose to enroll in Duke's student medical insurance plan (Duke SMIP) or the dental insurance plan offered through Dent-Well, The Graduate School will cover the cost of your individual premium through the first six consecutive years. Information on both insurance plans can be found on at <https://gradschool.duke.edu/medical-dental>. International students holding F-1 or J-1 visas are required to enroll in the Duke SMIP. Domestic students may choose not to enroll in the Duke plan; however, those who do not enroll must meet the [waiver criteria](#) and provide proof of comparable alternative insurance coverage.

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This admission offer is valid until {ENROLL-RESP-DATE}. Please accept or decline this offer using your Applicant Portal. If you choose to accept this offer and have not yet submitted your official, confidential transcripts, please do so as soon as possible. Official transcripts must be sent to The Graduate School directly from the institution issuing the transcript, or delivered by the student in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's stamp on the outside of the envelope.

Through this offer of admission we are expressing our confidence that you will excel in your chosen field. I hope you will decide to enroll at Duke and contribute to the work of our scholarly community. If you have any questions about this admission offer, please contact the graduate admissions office at (919) 684-3913 or [grad-admissions@duke.edu](mailto:grad-admissions@duke.edu).

Admission to a Ph.D. program is a significant milestone in your academic career. Congratulations, once again, on this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## *DENY LETTER (SAMPLE)*



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

Your application and supporting documents have been carefully reviewed by the {ACAD\_PLAN} department and by The Graduate School. As is often the case, the number of well-qualified applicants for admission to the Duke University Graduate School far exceeds the number of available places. Consequently, we are unable to admit all applicants judged capable of successful graduate work, and I regret that we cannot offer you admission to the {ACAD\_PLAN} {DEGREE} program.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to consider your application. I wish you the very best in your future career.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## *DENY FROM WAITLIST LETTER (SAMPLE)*



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

We previously informed you that your application was sufficiently strong to allow for the possibility of admission if additional spaces became available in the {ACAD\_PLAN} program. The number of excellent applicants to The Graduate School and our policy of limited enrollment have made it impossible for us to offer admission to more than a small number of the applicants who applied. I regret that our class is now full and we are unable to offer you admission.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to consider your application. I wish you the very best in your future career.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

## WAITLIST LETTER (SAMPLE)



{LetterPrintedDT}

{AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}  
{Address}

Dear {AddrFirstName} {AddrLastName}:

We have reviewed your application to the {ACAD\_PLAN} program and are impressed by your credentials. While we cannot offer you admission at this time, your application is sufficiently strong to allow for the possibility of admission at a later date. Your name has therefore been placed on an alternate list from which we will choose if vacancies occur.

Please accept or decline your space on the alternate list by logging into your Applicant Portal within the next 15 days. Once you have accepted, we will notify you promptly by email if a vacancy should occur. If you make other plans for the next year, please notify us by logging into your Applicant Portal and declining your spot on the alternate list. We appreciate having had the opportunity to review your application.

Sincerely,

**DEAN'S SIGNATURE HERE**

Paula D. McClain, Ph.D.  
Dean of The Graduate School  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

# **DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS LETTER INSTRUCTIONS & TEMPLATE**

## **Instructions for service requirements letter**

- **List the service requirements for years 1 through 5 of Ph.D. study.** We understand that you may not know exactly what future service requirements will be, but please outline your expectations as best you can right now.
- **Be sure to state whether the departmental service requirements are for academic or compensatory purposes.** To prevent errors and financial liability to your department, *please do not reference funding amounts (i.e. dollar amounts) in your service requirement letters.* Note that first-year funding details are already included in the student's Applicant Self-Service account.
- **Inform the student that (s)he will receive an annual reappointment letter at the beginning of each subsequent academic year.** (You can and should include financial amounts in these reappointment letters. Guidelines for the reappointment letter are in Chapter 4, Part F, item 2 of the DGS Manual: [https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/dgs\\_manual\\_ch04.pdf](https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/dgs_manual_ch04.pdf).)
- **Include contact information for the department's DGSA, in case students have follow-up questions.**

## **Service requirements letter template**

A service requirements letter template is included on the next page. You can modify the blue fields in the template as needed to suit your department's circumstances.

The template is not meant to be 100% "prescriptive." Please personalize the language in accordance with your department's requirements and communication style. (The wording of the first, second, and sixth paragraphs, in particular, will most likely vary substantially by department.) You should pay special attention to the details included in paragraphs 3 through 5, but you do not have to use the same exact wording provided in the template.

If you are already sending a welcome letter, you do not need to send a separate letter about service requirements. You can simply merge the details about service requirements into your welcome letter.

Dear *[Student Name]*:

On behalf of the *[Program Name]* department, I congratulate you on being admitted to the *[Program Name]* Ph.D. program. We understand that you may be facing a number of competing offers and deadlines, but we hope that you will thoughtfully consider our offer to join the intellectual community at Duke.

The Graduate School has already sent you an official admission offer, as well as instructions for accepting admission and accessing financial award details in your Applicant Portal. This letter outlines the service requirements of your admission offer.

As noted in your admission offer, *the [Program Name] department, in conjunction with The Graduate School and external funding entities*, will support you at or above the standard departmental stipend level and cover your tuition and fees for five years. Your funding for the first academic year, *[date range]*, will consist of a *[fellowship/teaching assistantship/research assistantship/graduate assistantship]*. Your *[fellowship/teaching assistantship/research assistantship/graduate assistantship]* stipend will be paid to you in equal monthly installments on the *[last workday of the month/25<sup>th</sup> of the month]*, beginning in *[month and year]*. *[If necessary, also state the following: As a condition of accepting the teaching assistantship/research assistantship/graduate assistantship, you must provide evidence of employability as required by federal government regulations.]*

Funding for the second through the fifth years of Ph.D. study will be provided through a combination of *[fellowship/teaching assistantship/research assistantship/graduate assistantship]* funds. At the beginning of each of those years, you will receive an annual reappointment letter describing the financial support and service requirements for that year. Note that, as part of their *[academic/funding]* requirements, all Ph.D. students in the *[Program Name]* department are expected *[to teach/to do research/to provide faculty assistance]* for *[specified number]* semesters. This *[teaching/research/faculty assistance]* requirement must be met during *[specified timeframe]* of your graduate studies.

To receive the funding support described in this letter, you must remain in good academic standing, fulfill all departmental service requirements, and be making satisfactory progress toward your degree.

We look forward to welcoming you to the *[Program Name]* department. If you have any questions about the program or your admission offer, please contact me directly or our department's program coordinator, *[Name of DGS.A]*, at *[contact number or email address]*.

Sincerely,

*[Signature of Director of Graduate Studies]*

Director of Graduate Studies