

## Competitive Graduate Award Terms 2025-2026 Recipients

The purpose of Competitive Graduate Awards (CGA) is to support highly qualified new graduate students who are accepted into masters degree programs at SIUE.

### Award Structure & Benefits

CGAs are granted for the nine-month academic year (fall and spring semesters). Recipients of the CGA are awarded a Research Assistantship (RA) position to conduct research under the guidance of a faculty mentor. The RA position will be awarded at the 25% level, which includes an average of 10 hours per week devoted to research activities. The RA position provides significant benefits, including:

- Full tuition waiver for both fall and spring semesters for up to 12 credit hours per semester. (Recipients are responsible for paying fees.)
- Highly competitive stipend rate of \$984 per month (\$492.35 per semi-monthly paycheck), for a total of \$8370 for the entire academic year, prior to tax deductions. (*A stipend rate of over \$24/hour!*)

For 2025-2026 awardees, the RA contract will span from 9/1/25 through 5/15/26.

- Summer tuition waiver for the summer following the awarded academic year for up to 9 credit hours. CGA recipients wishing to utilize the summer tuition waiver must complete the Earned Summer Tuition Waiver Form found on the [GA Forms website](#) and submit it to the Graduate School by the first day of the summer term.
- Eligible to apply for the [Research Grants for Graduate Students](#) funding during the first fall term of enrollment to support the costs associated with executing scholarly activities.

As Research Assistants, all [Graduate Assistantship](#) eligibility requirements, policies, and procedures apply to CGA recipients. Since the CGA Research Assistantship is a 25% position, CGA recipients ARE eligible to accept a second Graduate Assistantship position at a level of 25% or below.

### Eligibility

Prospective students who meet all of the below eligibility criteria and deadlines are encouraged to apply for the Competitive Graduate Award.

- The applicants must be one of the following:
  - a fully admitted new graduate student who is accepted as a classified student in a masters graduate degree program at SIUE and whose first term of enrollment will be no earlier than the summer preceding the fall award period. For example, eligibility for the 2025-2026 academic year award is limited to new graduate students beginning their SIUE masters programs in either the summer 2025 or fall 2025 semesters. (Students who have completed a prior graduate program at SIUE are not eligible to apply.)

- an SIUE undergraduate approved for admission to and currently enrolled in an approved combined bachelor to masters program provided they will be fully admitted to the graduate program before the fall award period (Note that this requirement includes having completed the baccalaureate degree.)
  - a previously-enrolled graduate student who have been out of their program for at least 4 semesters at the time of the CGA application
- The applicant must have a minimum 3.0 overall undergraduate cumulative GPA (*GPA from all undergraduate courses at all institutions attended*) and, if relevant, a minimum 3.25 graduate cumulative GPA in order to apply.
- The applicant must have a fully completed application to a masters program for the above qualified terms by December 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:30pm. All application requirements for the applicant's program must be received by this deadline, including test scores, recommendation forms, and transcripts. Applicants with a completed masters program application who are pending a final admission decision by the graduate program are eligible to receive an invitation to apply for the CGA if all other eligibility criteria are met.
- SIUE employees and State of Illinois Civil Service employees at other universities are not eligible for the award.
- Currently-enrolled SIUE undergraduate student workers are eligible to apply provided they meet the above requirements.

All applicants who meet the criteria and receive an application invitation are encouraged to apply.

#### **Application Deadline**

- In addition to meeting all above criteria, including having a fully completed masters program application by December 1<sup>st</sup>, applicants must also have a fully completed CGA application submitted by January 15th at 4:30 pm. This includes both the essay question responses *and* the recommender form submitted by the identified CGA recommender.

*Applications that are not completed by the deadline will not be eligible for award consideration.*  
Application Details

The CGA application must be submitted and completed through the SIUE Application Center. The CGA application includes the following items:

1. One completed recommendation form submitted by the identified CGA recommender. The recommender must be someone who can speak to the applicant's ability to be successful in graduate studies and research. The recommendation form will be emailed to the recommender listed in the application that allows the recommender to respond to specific questions about the applicant's experiences and abilities.

2. Essay question responses. Applicants must respond to four brief essay questions as prompted in the application, including their research/creative activity interests within their discipline, original ideas they have for potential research/creative activity projects within those areas, their previous research/creative activity experiences within their discipline, and details on their specific roles during those experiences.

### **Conditions of Award**

Recipients of Competitive Graduate Awards:

- Must carry 6 semester hours or more of graduate-level work throughout the term of the CGA
- Must remain in good academic standing throughout the term of the CGA
- Must participate satisfactorily in a scholarly activity mentored by a faculty member throughout the term of the CGA
- Must present a poster presentation summarizing their research activities at the Graduate School Spring Research Symposium at the conclusion of their first year
- As the recipient of a Research Assistantship, CGAs must comply with all Graduate Assistant requirements, policies, and procedures.

If a recipient fails to comply with these conditions, the Graduate School may revoke the award.

If you have any questions regarding the Competitive Graduate Award, please reach out to the Graduate School at 618-650-3010 or [graduateschool@siue.edu](mailto:graduateschool@siue.edu).