

# **Association of Students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

## **Graduate Student Assembly**

### **Special Rules - Graduate Travel Awards Program**

#### **Section 1. Definition**

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ASUN) Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) Graduate Travel Awards Program (GTAP) contributes funds to qualifying individuals' travel expenses for active conference or workshop participation in the United States and abroad.

#### **Section 2. Objective**

The GTAP facilitates and promotes the intellectual and professional development of graduate students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and contributes to the strengthening of the University and its increased prominence in the greater scholarly community.

#### **Section 3. GTAP Committee**

1. The GTAP Committee shall be composed of no less than five (5) members, of which one (1) shall serve as Chair as elected by the membership of the GSA by simple plurality of votes at its inaugural meeting.
2. The GTAP Committee shall meet regularly to evaluate applications, grant awards, and evaluate expense reimbursement requests.
3. Committee members shall adhere to the highest academic standards and should excuse themselves if any conflict of interest arises.

#### **Section 4. Awards**

1. The number of awards will be determined by the GTAP fund budget and shall be equally divided among the three application periods (Fall, Spring and Summer).
2. Awards for domestic travel shall not exceed six hundred dollars (\$600) and awards for international travel shall not exceed eight hundred dollars (\$800). These amounts may only be altered by the GSA at the beginning of each academic year.

## Section 5. Deadlines

The following periods and deadlines shall be used for the GTAP.

Period	Travel Between	Application		Reimbursement	
		Form Due	Notification	Form Due	Payment
Fall	September 1 <sup>st</sup> December 31 <sup>st</sup>	June 30 <sup>th</sup>	July 31 <sup>st</sup>	January 31 <sup>st</sup>	February 28 <sup>th</sup>
Spring	January 1 <sup>st</sup> April 30 <sup>th</sup>	October 31 <sup>st</sup>	November 30 <sup>th</sup>	May 31 <sup>st</sup>	June 30 <sup>th</sup>
Summer	May 1 <sup>st</sup> August 31 <sup>st</sup>	February 28 <sup>th</sup>	March 31 <sup>st</sup>	September 30 <sup>th</sup>	October 31 <sup>st</sup>

## Section 6. Reviewers

1. Peer reviewers shall be graduate students in good academic standing that have established academic residency at the University, in accordance with the Office of Graduate Studies regulations.
  - a. Any student fulfilling the above-mentioned requirement may request to serve as a peer reviewer for any period, provided they does so at least 15 days before the application deadline. Tenure as a peer reviewer shall expire after every review period.
  - b. The GTAP Committee shall determine any additional requirements for serving as a peer reviewer, as well as the application procedure for becoming one.
  - c. Any student serving as a peer reviewer shall be disqualified from applying to and receiving any GTAP funds during their period of service.
  - d. Peer reviewers shall adhere to the highest academic standards and should excuse themselves if any conflict of interest arises.
2. Faculty reviewers shall be members of the graduate faculty of the University. The GTAP Committee shall recruit members from various disciplines to serve as Faculty reviewers for the GTAP.
  - a. Faculty reviewers shall not evaluate applications submitted by students to which they serve as chair or members of their supervisory committee, or with whom they collaborate.
  - b. Faculty reviewers shall adhere to the highest academic standards and should excuse themselves if any conflict of interest arises.

## Section 7. Eligibility

1. No student from a University department or graduate program who has failed to appoint or elect and maintain a Departmental Representative to the GSA shall be eligible to apply or receive any GTAP funds.
2. Applicants must be enrolled in a degree program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and be in good academic standing.
3. All travel must be completed before graduation.

4. Students are eligible to receive up to one travel award per academic year, but they may apply multiple times, provided they only apply once during each semester (e.g., Fall, Spring, or Summer). Previous winners will be considered secondary to first time applicants.
5. Applicants that have requested and received a refund for University Program and Facilities Fee (UPFF) Fund A during the current or previous semester shall not be eligible to apply or receive GTAP funds.

## **Section 8. Application and Evaluation**

1. All applications, as established in Annex 1, and application materials will be available year-round on the GSA website and should be filed before the established deadline.
  - a. The GTAP Committee may establish an electronic or paper filing procedure, but both mechanisms may not be used at the same time.
2. Applications must be accompanied by:
  - a. Proof of application to present at a conference or workshop or proof of acceptance as a presenter.
  - b. List of all other sources of funding to attend the conference or workshop, including but not limited to departmental support. List should detail what cost each source will cover, including GTAP.
3. Applications will be blindly reviewed by an “ad hoc” committee composed of two (2) peer reviewers and one (1) faculty reviewer.
4. Travel award applications shall be evaluated on a fifty (50) point scale in accordance with the rubric in Annex 2.
5. The GTAP Committee shall refer all applications to peer and faculty reviewers which shall return their completed evaluation rubrics no later than ten (10) days after receiving them. If any of the reviewers fails to return the completed evaluation rubric, a new reviewer may be selected, provided the evaluation is returned in no more than five (5) days.
6. To ensure evaluations are returned in due time, the GTAP Committee shall distribute applications evenly among peer and faculty reviewers.

## **Section 9. Ranking, Granting and Notification**

1. The GTAP Committee shall calculate the final score of all applications, with the highest ranked application receiving the requested funds, and proceeding downwards, until all monies have been allocated.
2. Provided two or more applications are tied for the last funds to be allocated:
  - a. The faculty reviewer score shall determine who gets the award.
  - b. A coin toss shall determine the awardee, provided the above-defined procedure fails to favor an application.
3. Awardees shall be notified electronically via email before the deadline and shall be required to formally accept or decline the award within seven (7) days.
4. If an awardee declines an award, or is unable to attend the conference, he or she must notify the GTAP Committee as soon as possible. If the notification deadline has not elapsed, the GTAP Committee may re-award the funds for that period.

## **Section 10. GTAP Funds**

1. Funds may only be used as approved by University policies and as set forth by the GTAP Committee and the Graduate School.
2. **The individual will only receive funds to cover the exact expenditures up to the amount approved.**
3. Travel Grant funds may not be used to fund the following:
  - a. Anything found in violation of law and/or University rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
  - b. Personal travel.
  - c. Items and expenses not included in the original travel grant application.
  - d. Purchase of beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages.
  - e. Plaques, prizes, scholarships, awards, trophies or medals or other related gift items.
  - f. Payments to invest in or provide capital for any business or commercial enterprise, or any activity intended to generate profit.
  - g. Telephone, electronic facsimile, Internet, cable or communication device charges.
  - h. Prohibited purchase include:
    - i. Firearms, weapons, or ammunition.
    - ii. Tobacco or tobacco related products.
    - iii. Illegal or illicit substances or devices.
    - iv. Controlled substances
    - v. Pornography or other products that are demeaning or degrading to people.
  - i. Any court actions.
  - j. Costs or litigation against the University, of its employees in fulfillment of their duties, or against its students.
  - k. Rental vehicles and rental vehicle insurance unless proper justification is provided.
  - l. Incidental travel not on the original application.
  - m. Travel costs for a graduate student engaged in lobbying, class work requirements, or job searching
  - n. Association dues, even if required to attend a conference or competition.
  - o. In the cases of transportation, University mileage regulations will apply.
4. Any funds allocated by the GSA budget not awarded during the Fall period shall roll-over to the Spring period, and any funds allocated by the GSA budget and/or rolled-over from the Spring period shall roll-over to the summer period.
5. No GTAP funds may be used for any other purpose than granting conference/workshops awards, and no award may be granted any later than eight (8) days past the notification deadline.

## **Section 11. Reimbursement**

1. No award shall be extended as a check or transfer to the University/department, but rather **all travel awards shall be reimbursed to the individual.**
  - a. The GTAP shall not reimburse more than three (3) hotel night stays unless proper justification is provided.
  - b. Only actual expenses may be reimbursed, per diem rates may only be used to estimate the cost of travel.

2. No later than thirty (30) days from the conference conclusion, a reimbursement form shall be submitted to the GTAP Committee itemizing what is to be reimbursed and attaching the corresponding receipts.
3. The GTAP Committee shall verify that all claimed expenses comply with University, ASUN, GSA, and GTAP regulations, and verify with the University department or graduate program of the student that no expense has been claimed more than once.
4. After all expenses have been verified and approved, and the University department or graduate program has reviewed and endorsed the report, a check or transfer shall be extended to the awardee for the amount approved.
5. Mileage reimbursements will be verified. The GTAP will only reimburse mileage to and from an event. Mileage beyond the intended destination will be subject to review and may be denied. All mileage requests are subject to the University mileage policy.
6. The GTAP shall have thirty (30) days to process the awardee's reimbursement request, provided the awardee, University department or graduate program fulfill all GTAP Committee requests in a timely manner.
7. Special provisions shall be taken if conference travel occurs close to the end of the fiscal year, so that the awarded monies are disbursed from the appropriate budget.
8. University Travel Services policies and regulations shall be followed at all times.

## **Section 12. Compliance**

1. It is the responsibility of all graduate students seeking GTAP funds to read and understand policies and procedures of the University, the Graduate School, ASUN and GSA. Individuals that receive GTAP funding must be in compliance with all policies and procedures at all times. Individuals that are found to be in violation of any policy of the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, GSA and GTAP must reimburse any and all funds they received during the time they were in violation of these policies. Furthermore, individuals that attempt to defraud or mislead the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, GSA and/or GTAP will be subject to disciplinary review, and individuals may be held individually responsible and criminally liable for any funds received illegally or under false pretenses.
2. Any student may request the GTAP Committee permission to review their application and evaluation materials, but at all times the confidentiality of the peer and faculty reviewers shall be maintained.

Approved by the Graduate Student Assembly on April 5, 2016.

Amended by the Graduate Student Assembly on October 4, 2016.

Amended by the Graduate Student Assembly on October 3, 2017.

Amended by the Graduate Student Assembly on April 5, 2022.

Amended by the Graduate Student Assembly on March 7, 2023.

## Appendix 1. GTAP Application

### Applicant information

<b>Name</b>	_____	<b>NU ID</b>	_____
<b>Email</b>	_____	<b>Phone</b>	_____
<b>Department</b>	_____	<b>Degree</b>	• PhD      • Masters
<b>Conference</b>	_____	<b>Date</b>	_____
<b>Location</b>	_____		

Please attach:

1. Conference registration.
2. Conference poster/oral presentation application or acceptance, including the submitted abstract.
3. Any supporting information requested in this application. Any further information and/or documentation will not be evaluated.

Statement of Purpose:

In 500 words or less please describe your research and the importance of attending this conference. Please keep in mind that reviewers may not be in your particular area of study. Essays longer than 500 words will be disqualified. All applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Graduate Travel Award Program Rules. A copy of the evaluation rubric can be obtained from the Graduate Student Assembly website: <http://unl.edu/gsa>.

### Conference and funding information

1. Have you applied to present at this conference? Yes/No
2. Has your application to present been accepted? Yes/No
3. Was this research/work conducted at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln? Yes/No
4. Has the work you will be presenting resulted in a previous publication/presentation?  
Yes/No
  - a. Are you the first author on this paper/presentation? Yes/No
5. Have you applied for a GSA travel award in the past? Yes/No
6. Have you been granted a GSA travel award in the past? Yes/No
7. Are you anticipating to receive other funding to attend this meeting? (i.e. Department, Advisor, Other Grants, Other University funds, etc) Yes/No

Budget information

Travel award funds may only be applied to the items listed below.

<b>Cost Type</b>		<b>Multiply Divide by</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>Covered by</b> (Choose one: GTAP, Department, Advisor, Personal, etc.)
Travel				
Airline Ticket	\$			
Ground Transportation		(miles)	x \$0.58*	
Other Transportation	\$		(i.e. Taxi or Uber)	
Conference Registration Fee	\$			
Lodging	\$	per night	x # nights / # occupants	
Meals		day	x \$ per day	
<b>Total Attendance Cost</b>	\$			

\*Federal milage reimbursement rate from the IRS.

Student

I certify that I have read and agree to the current rules and directions for the Graduate Travel Award Program (GTAP) and certify that all information I have provided in this application is accurate. I further grant permission to the GTAP Committee and the Graduate School to verify my status as a graduate student in good standing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and my eligibility for the travel award competition.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty advisor

I certify that I have read this travel award application, including the budget, that the applicant is my student and is a graduate student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in good standing, that all information in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge, the budget is realistic, and this student is likely to attend and give this presentation at this conference.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2. GTAP Peer and Faculty Review Rubric

<p><b>Clear, concise description of research</b></p> <p>Student summarizes research in a clear and concise way that can be understood by fellow graduate students and/or faculty who may not be in their area of study.</p>	20
<p><b>Outcome of travel to research or impact to field/body of work</b></p> <p>Reviewers can clearly understand the goals and outcomes of the research to be presented or how travel with help student's professional development.</p>	10
<p><b>Intellectual Merit</b></p> <p>The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge. How important are the proposed activities to advancing knowledge within its own field or across different fields? Does the student demonstrate their ability to discuss and present their work in a professional setting?</p>	5
<p><b>Broader Impacts</b></p> <p>The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes. How well does the proposed activity benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes? This does not need to be "society" at large. This means how does your research contribute or make an impact in general. Additionally, how does the student's travel impact the university? As a student, what are you bringing back to the university?</p>	5



<b>Long-term goals of the applicant</b>  Students describe the importance of travel for the advancement of their career and the impact it will have on other members in their group/lab at the University.	5
<b>Visibility of the University</b>  Student describes how their travel will further the name and reputation of the University. The University is specifically noted in the application and/or represented in some way.	5
<b>Total</b>	50