# Funding for Graduate Assistants, Predoctoral scholars, and Postdoctoral scholars in Connection with the Arrival of New Children

(Revised July 2013)

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**Background**

An increasing number of graduate assistant, predoctoral, and postdoctoral appointees are beginning families during their appointment periods. Faculty mentors, departmental and college administrators have voiced a strong need to provide short- term funding for a reasonable period around the time of the arrival of children to provide an environment that is supportive of all stakeholders. Short-term funding is particularly important in the case of graduate assistants, predoctoral scholars, and postdoctoral scholars because of their typically short appointment periods, as well as the short term, goal-­‐ oriented nature of the projects that typically fund their appointments. It should be noted that enrollment in this program does not automatically extend the period of employment specified in the individual’s Letter of Intent. If the period of the leave extends beyond the end date of the Letter of Intent, a new Letter of Intent should be in place before the leave is taken. Otherwise, the funding from the Graduate College ends when the appointment ends.

**Program Description**

1. The purpose of this program is to provide short-term funding for up to 12 continuous weeks of leave for all graduate assistants, predoctoral scholars, and postdoctoral scholars who will be adding a child to their family through birth or adoption. The Graduate College will provide a portion of the individual’s assistantship stipend/salary to allow the department to replace him or her during the leave. All graduate assistants, predoctoral scholars, and postdoctoral scholars who can document their status as a new parent will be eligible for short- term funding, regardless of their stipend funding source.

2. Leaves may begin during pregnancy, in the time prior to adoption, or after the arrival of the child, but the total period of paid leave may not exceed 12 weeks1.

3. In co-parenting families, both parents are eligible, and may split the leave if they both hold a current appointment as a GA, predoctoral scholar, or postdoctoral scholar. For example, each parent may take 6 continuous weeks of leave (or any other combination that totals no more than 12 weeks). Leaves by co-parents may be concurrent or sequential.

4. Funding will be limited to a total of twelve weeks per family for the addition of one or more children to the family at a given time (e.g., the birth or adoption of twins entitles the family to 12 weeks rather than 24 weeks of paid leave).

5. In eligible co-parenting families, if they wish to split the twelve weeks, each must complete a separate form, with a note indicating that the leave will be split with the other parent, and naming the co-parent and his or her department and college. Each parent will be paid at their current assistantship rate.

6. Graduate assistants, predoctoral scholars, and postdoctoral scholars shall be allowed to return to their original appointment, according to the terms of their original appointment, following the bridge funding period.

**Funding Source**

The bridge funding will be provided by an equal match from the Graduate College and the academic home department of the graduate assistant or by an equal match from the Graduate College and the home academic college or equivalent employing unit of the predoctoral scholar or postdoc. Tuition will be paid by the academic college.