

Southern Methodist University
Simmons School of Education and Human Development
Graduate Council Policies and Procedures
2015-2016

I. Introduction to the Graduate Council

The Simmons School of Education and Human Development's Graduate Council was elected by the student body from each department of the Simmons School, and administers funds for graduate student enrichment and academic projects.

The Graduate Council also represents all Simmons School graduate students, and is here to review any suggestions, comments or complaints students have.

For more information about the Council and how you can contact your school's representative, please visit <http://www.smu.edu/Simmons/AboutUs/GraduateCouncil>.

DISCLAIMER:

- a) All policies, procedures, and rules are subject to interpretation by the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council reserves the right to change any policies, procedures, or rules without prior notice.
- b) Applicants who are not granted an award during their first submission may resubmit their application during the next funding cycle for reconsideration.
- c) Applications (same conference/event) may only be submitted for consideration twice.

II. Services Provided by the Graduate Council

The Graduate Council reviews applications for funding from Simmons graduate students three times per academic year: Fall, Spring, and Summer.

A. Eligibility requirements

- a. Funds are available only to currently-enrolled students at Southern Methodist University's Simmons School of Education and Human Development.
- b. Funds are available for:
 - i. Sponsorship of networking events for Simmons graduate students;
 - ii. Sponsorship of enrichment events for Simmons graduate students to attend (i.e., conferences);
 - iii. Sponsorship of guest speakers at SMU, with focus of presentation geared toward Simmons graduate students;

- iv. Simmons School reading groups (e.g. the Social Justice Reading Group);
- v. Conducting original research in connection with the student's degree program;
- vi. Purchasing supplies or materials related to degree outcomes and/or goals (such as specialty books not required for course credit, disposable supplies for implementing a short-term project);
- vii. Presenting at or attending academic conferences;
- viii. Purchasing equipment related to degree outcomes and/or goals;
- ix. Joining professional organizations related to degree program;
- x. Travel abroad for academically related enrichment – ONLY IF NOT SEEKING ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR COURSE;
- xi. Online seminars;
- xii. Professional development workshops; and
- xiii. Other activities related to degree program/coursework, pursuant to the Council's discretion.
- xiv. Mileage – calculated at 57.5 cents per mile, home-to-venue. If driving to an event mileage will be reimbursed only for events in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana. If beyond these limits the Council recommends flying.

B. Regulations

- a. Students who have been awarded funds by the Graduate Council will not be reimbursed until after the activity for which funds were sought has occurred.
- b. Reimbursement Procedure:
 - i. Once you return from your travel, contact Graduate Council Treasurer, Kacie Kubik at kmkubik@smu.edu, to begin the check request process and submit your receipts. Receipts must be itemized with no alcohol purchases on receipts.
 - ii. Copies of receipts may be submitted to the Treasurer via email, interoffice mail, or standard mail. Kacie Kubik currently works in Maguire 255 of the Cox School of Business (P.O. Box: 750333, Dallas, TX 75275-0333). Please include a detailed reconciliation with receipt submission.
 - iii. If you have not completed a W-9 form for the Student Comptroller's Office, you will need to do so. The Treasurer can provide a copy of the W-9.
 - iv. Once the receipts and W-9 are received, the Treasurer will complete the necessary forms and submit the check request to the Student Comptroller. Requests that are submitted by Tuesday afternoon are processed and available on Thursday of the same week. You will be notified via email when your check is ready for pick-up from the Student Comptroller's Office located on the third floor of the Hughes-Trigg building.

For students at SMU Plano campus:

- i. Once you return from your travel, contact Graduate Council Treasurer, Kacie Kubik at kmkubik@smu.edu, to begin the check request process and submit your receipts. Receipts must be itemized with no alcohol purchases on receipts.
- ii. Copies of receipts may be submitted to the Treasurer via email, interoffice mail, or standard mail. Kacie Kubik currently works in Maguire 255 of the Cox School of Business (P.O. Box: 750333, Dallas, TX 75275-0333). Please include a detailed reconciliation with receipt submission.
- iii. If you have not completed a W-9 form for the Students Comptroller's Office, you will need to do so. The Treasurer can provide a copy of the W-9.
- iv. Please also include a mailing address for where you would like your check mailed.
- v. Once the receipts and W-9 are received, the Treasurer will complete the necessary forms and submit the check request to the Student Comptroller. Requests that are submitted by Tuesday afternoon are processed and available on Thursday of the same week. You will be notified via email when your check has been processed and mailed.

Check Request Forms must be submitted within 90 days of expense incursion and/or return from travel, whichever comes first. If reimbursement is not sought within that 90-day period, the student will be considered to have waived their funding award.

C. Limitations

- a. The financial support a student can receive for travel expenses is \$500 for local activities ("local" is defined as 100 miles from the applicant's house), \$1000 for domestic activities (defined as within the contiguous 48 states), and \$1500 for international activities.
- b. The maximum support a student can receive per academic year is \$1500.
- c. The academic year is defined as Fall through Summer.
- d. Students may only submit one application per funding cycle.
- e. If you are seeking funds for courses connected with national and international travel, you may only seek reimbursement for such costs if you do **not** seek academic credit for the course. (Please note this is a university-wide policy, not limited to the Graduate Council.)
- f. The following items are not eligible for reimbursement:
 - i. First-class travel, upgrade fees, flight change fees, or baggage fees.
 - ii. Room service, phone calls, movies, mini-bar items, and Internet service.
 - iii. Alcoholic beverages.
 - iv. Taxi, Uber (or similar), airport/hotel shuttles, or vehicle rentals.
- g. If a student is awarded funds for travel but is unable to participate, the student may only seek reimbursement for travel expenses if:

- i. The student did not purchase travel insurance which will cover travel expenses; and
 - ii. The reason the student was unable to travel was one of the following:
 - 1. Death of the student's immediate family member; or
 - 2. Severe illness (hospitalization) of the student or an immediate family member.
 - iii. The student must provide the Graduate Council with sufficient documentation (e.g., a medical bill) supporting the inability to travel for one of these reasons. Any information provided will be held in the strictest confidence by the members of the Council. Such information will not be used or disclosed for any purpose other than determining whether the student is eligible for expense reimbursement.
- h. Amounts awarded may vary dependent upon the number and quality of applications, and the funds available per cycle.
- i. A Group submitting applications to the Simmons Graduate Council shall be defined as three or more students seeking funding for the same event. Students may themselves determine whether to apply individually or collectively. If applying as a Group students are required to submit potential budgets before the event as it relates to each individual of the Group as well as receipts for each individual after the event. It is up to the discretion of the Group whether or not to use one student's financial availability (i.e. credit card(s)) for reservations or payment with the intent of being reimbursed from other members of the Group later, but that student must be a member of the Group (no parents or non-participants), budgets/receipts must still be submitted as they relate to each student, and all Council policies, procedures, and monetary limitations per student still apply (limits cannot be combined). For this reason the Council advises prudence and if such an individual is selected suggests he or she use responsible judgment as they accept the risk of not being reimbursed past their individual limit. Group applications will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

D. Repayment of Disbursed Funds

- a. If the Council learns that a student has violated these policies and procedures, or has been untruthful in an application for funds, the Council reserves the right to seek repayment of any and all funds disbursed to the student as a result of said violation or untruthful application.

E. In the Event of a Tie

- a. In the event of a tie that must be broken – whether from a department election, a funding application, or any circumstance involving Council business – the Council will break the tie by a vote of Council members with decision going to a 2/3 majority. If the tie directly involves a Council member the member's vote is excluded and the member

should, if applicable, remove themselves from the room. If after three votes the tie is not broken the tie-breaker will go to the present Council Faculty Advisor.

F. Internal Council Position Logistics

- a. Position Recall: Any member of the Simons Graduate Council may be removed from their position involuntarily due to lack of attendance, not adhering to council rules, or any other offenses deemed significant by the council. In the event that a member must be removed, a 2/3 majority of the council must vote to remove the member from the council. Once the council has voted to remove a member, the removed member is immediately no longer a representative for the council.

- b. Recruitment: Simmons Graduate Council recruitment will occur twice in each academic year. Recruitment will only consist of recruiting for the positions currently open in the council. A digital nomination form will be sent out to all Simmons students to nominate themselves or others, followed by a formal voting process from all Simmons students for their representatives.