***BLAZER GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP (TRAINEE) AWARD***

*Place letter on your departmental letterhead*

**[*Date*]**

**[*Type Recipient’s Name, Address*]**

Dear Student Trainee:

On behalf **[*your department name here*]** and the UAB Graduate School, I am pleased to offer you an appointment as a Blazer Graduate Research Fellow in the [***type graduate program name here***] at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. First, congratulations on this award offer, appointment as a Blazer Fellow is available only to students with an excellent academic record and sincere interest our program with a demonstrated ability to succeed.

The purpose of this fellowship is to aid in the pursuit of your studies. Financial support as Blazer Graduate Research Fellow is for 16 months from your first term of enrollment. If recommended by the director of your program, you may receive additional graduate student appointments in subsequent years but will retain the honor of being a Blazer Fellow throughout your time in this program at UAB.

Your appointment as a Blazer Fellow will be for the period of **[1st day of fall term] to [16 months later, 202X].** During this period, you will receive a monthly payment of **[$2,416.66 (STEM programs)/$2,166.67 (non-STEM programs)]**. You will also receive 9 credit hours per term of graduate tuition and fees, as well as single-coverage student health insurance, should you choose to enroll in UAB’s student health plan. Any coursework taken outside of this program will be at your own expense, and may be subject to non-resident tuition rates. No services are required as a condition of receiving this fellowship.

Your effort during the tenure of this fellowship should be fully devoted to carrying out activities required by your program, including coursework, any original research necessary to fulfill thesis, pre-dissertation, or dissertation requirements as stipulated by the program. This appointment is intended to help you to be a full-time student, immersed in your graduate program, while also developing your professional skills.

In addition to your departmental requirements, the following are required as a Blazer Fellow:

* You must register for, and satisfactorily complete, at least 27 semester hours of approved graduate work each year. This is generally in the form of 9 hours each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer) but can be arranged differently as needed and approved by your program.
* You must participate in and engage with Blazer Fellowship activities as offered by the UAB Graduate School:
	+ Attend a welcome event for Blazer Fellows in your first semester
	+ Participation in a 1-hour seminar of professional development every month in the first 3 months of each semester (September-November, January-March, May-July)
	+ Complete a 3-credit hour professional development workshop in your first or second summer enrolled at UAB
	+ Participate in a day-of-service activity each semester

We have every expectation that you will perform well in our program and this fellowship is designed to start your time here with the ability to focus on your plan of study. You must remain in good academic standing and make satisfactory progress toward your degree in order to continue as a Trainee. You must meet with your Graduate Program Director or dissertation committee to review your progress as a Graduate Trainee on an annual basis, or as needed according to your education plan. Further, as a Graduate Research Fellow, you will be subject to the applicable policies and procedures and the Board and Trustees of the University of Alabama.

As this is a paid fellowship, there are some important financial notes:

* You may not engage in any remunerated (other paid) activities either on or off campus without prior approval. Exceptions to this rule are rare and require approval in writing by the Graduate School Dean.
* You are strongly encouraged you to read IRS Publication 970. These documents will explain the tax status of your award. Unless you are a non-resident alien for tax purposes, UAB will not withhold taxes from your fellowship award. It is imperative for you to fully understand the applicable tax laws and make the necessary provisions to pay any required taxes. If you are a federal financial aid applicant, this award may affect your aid eligibility.
* Please contact the **[insert your departmental fiscal officer name here]** for further details.
* Nothing contained in this letter is intended to establish a contractual relationship with you.

Again, on behalf of our department and the UAB Graduate School, congratulations on this appointment as a Blazer Fellow. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions that you may have regarding your acceptance, award, or the program. We hope that you will accept this offer by signing this letter in the space below and returning it to me as soon as possible, but no later than [***type date here***]*.*

Sincerely,

[Program Director]

[Graduate Program]

Read and accepted:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s Signature:  |  | Date:  |  |