



POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE “GSG PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAVEL AWARD”

I. PURPOSE

This award is designed to support the academic experience and professional growth of current UAB Graduate Students. An award of up to \$400.00 is available for eligible graduate students who meet the enrollment and eligibility requirement for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”. The award is offered as a supplemental reimbursement to cover expenses and cannot exceed \$400.00. These awards are **not** meant to reimburse for required UAB credit generating activities or for activities that are not primarily professional in purpose.

II. ELIGIBILITY

The following are the requirements for eligibility for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”. All eligibility requirements must be met according to the application in order for a student to be considered for the award. **Students who meet the eligibility requirements may be awarded a maximum of two (2) awards while enrolled at UAB.**

1. Professional Development/Travel Requirements

Funds awarded through this program may be used to support the following and must directly benefit the individual Graduate Student:

- a. Participation in Professional Conferences
 - I. Expenses related to lodging and travel to and from conferences
 - a. Hotel, train, car rental, plane, bus, uber etc etc
 - II. Registration fees and membership fees
 - III. Poster printing service fee
- b. Participation in Non-UAB Academic Training Activities and Professional Development Opportunities
 - I. UAB credit generating activities/courses are NOT eligible for this award
 - II. Admissions exam fees and fees for training are NOT eligible for this award
- c. Purchase of books necessary for completion of research and/or degree
- d. Purchase of software necessary for completion of research and/or degree
 - I. This award CANNOT be used to purchase lab supplies or equipment.
 - II. This award CANNOT be used to purchase hardware (i.e., laptop, tablets, headphones and or webcams).



2. Enrollment

The following are eligibility requirements for award applicants:

- a. Applicants must be **enrolled as a full-time graduate student** (9 credit hours) at UAB through the Graduate School. Applicants must be enrolled at the time of application, and disbursement of funds.
 - o Example: If you are applying in Fall 2025, and your conference is in Spring 2025, but you will have graduated by then, **YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THIS AWARD.**
- b. Applicants must be in good academic standing according to their student record on BlazerNet.

3. The following are **NOT** eligible to apply for “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”:

- a. Undergraduate students
- b. 5th year students who have not completed their undergraduate degree
- c. Non-degree seeking students
- d. Part time students (less than 9 credit hours)
- e. Any graduate student whose graduate program has their own Student Government Association (SGA) funded by student tuition service fees
- f. Any graduate student enrolled in the following schools:
 - Medicine*
 - Dentistry
 - Optometry*

*While Medical (M.D.) and Optometry (O.D.) students are not eligible for the award, Ph.D. students enrolled in the School of Medicine or Optometry may apply.

- g. Applicants who have already received a “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” in that same academic year.
- h. Applicants who have received a total of two (2) awards already during their time at UAB.

3. Exceptions

The following are exceptions to the eligibility requirements:

- a. Medicine, Dentistry, and Optometry students who have been an active senator for the Graduate Student Government and serve on a GSG committee for a minimum of six (6) months are eligible to apply for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”.
- b. Any graduate student who actively participates in a GSG committee will be eligible to apply for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”. “Active participation” is determined at the discretion of the GSG Vice President and the chair of the GSG committee to which the applicant belongs.
- c. Eligibility that is not explicitly defined in this document is determined on a case-by-case basis by the GSG Treasurer and Travel Grants Officer.



III. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Complete and submit the online “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” application (available on UAB GSG website and UAB ENGAGE <https://www.uab.edu/students/involvement/engage>) during the appropriate application period. This period is determined by the GSG Treasurer, Awards Chair, and/or President. (see DEADLINES V.2).
2. For an application to be considered for selection, **ALL** fields need to be completed. This includes, but is not limited to, the following information:
 - a. Full name of conference/workshop, software/book as it appears online or in the registration information.
 - b. Correct estimated dates of travel or when purchase will be used.
 - c. The **DATE** is used to exclude applications that are not within the designated award period. If this date is incorrect, your application will not be considered.
 - a. If the date of your need is PRIOR to the application period, it will not be considered.
 - i. For example: If you went to a conference in December 2024, and apply in the Spring of 2025, you will not receive the travel award for that.
 - d. For presenters: tentative or final abstract, including the title and authors OR Full description of the academic activity and the purpose of travel.
 - e. Detailed but brief justification for the award. If this is not filled in, application will not be considered.
3. For **Travel related Awards**: By digitally signing the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” application, the student agrees that he/she is willing to comply with the “Student Travel Statement of Agreement” listed in **section VI**.
4. NOTE: Due to the volume of applications received by the GSG, we are unable to consider applications that contain errors or are incomplete. Please ensure that your application is accurate before submitting. If you believe to have submitted an error, simply resubmit a new application prior to the closing of the form. **Only the most recent application will be considered.**
5. Within 4 weeks after application is closed, all eligible and completed applications submitted during the application period are collected and sorted randomly to determine the order in which awards are awarded.
 - a. Those who applied in previous cycles and did not receive the award (but were eligible) will be considered high priority in terms of random selection.
 - b. Please note that once names have been selected and submitted for awards, GSG has no impact on when the money will be applied to their student account. GSG has no direct access to personal student accounts, and



therefore only receive updates as they come. Those updates will be relayed to those students.

- i. **Please refrain from repeatedly sending emails to GSG of expected times for funds to appear as they have no access to that information directly.**
- c. The award amount requested will show up in your student account. It may not directly say “GSG travel award”, but the amount should be the same.
 - i. Should the amount not be the same, that means it was applied to a balance that you had on your account.
 1. Typically, the awards do not get applied to things that the graduate school is paying for (such as tuition).
 2. However, if you have an account balance for something other than things of that nature, such as a parking pass, healthcare appointment missed fee etc., the award may **automatically** be applied to those items once in your student account.
 - a. This is out of the control of GSG. If this happens, it is best to speak with someone who is over student accounts.

6. GSG SENATOR PREFERENTIAL SELECTION

Not exceeding one-third (1/3) of the total awards per semester, active GSG Senators who have exceeded expectations for participation and service to the GSG will receive preferential allocation for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”. Eligibility and granting of the available awards by this mechanism is determined on a case-by-case basis by a vote of the elected GSG Executive Board members and this decision is final. Guidelines for those who would qualify for this selection process are defined as senators who have:

- a. **Attended at least 5 of the 6 previous GSG Senate meetings.**
- b. **Currently exceeding participation expectations in at least one of the GSG committees** to the satisfaction of the Executive Board member responsible for the said committee.
 - I. Examples include but are not limited to: Regular attendance and participation at the GSG budget meetings, Volunteering to manage/plan a social or philanthropic activity, or Serving as a committee chair or co-chair.
- c. If a senator declines an Award twice in one school year, they will be unable to apply for future awards.
- d. Elected Executive Board members are not eligible for this preferential allocation but remain eligible for the Award in the general selection pool.
- e. If eligible preferential applications exceed one-third of the total awards granted by this mechanism, randomization will be used and senators who do not receive an award via this mechanism will still be eligible for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” in the general selection pool.



“GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” are awarded to applicants based on the total funds available for each semester as determined by the Treasurer and/or the Travel Grants Officer. After randomization, students are notified within 1 week of application closing if they have received an award or not.

V. REIMBURSEMENT

1. Students that are using multiple funds to reimburse their purchases should submit their reimbursement to their respective departments and the department should coordinate with the graduate school for reimbursement.
 - a. **For travel related reimbursement**, all applicants must submit a **Travel Pre-Approval Form** (<https://www.uab.edu/financialaffairs/forms/travel-pre-approval-form>) to their respective departments. If this form is not approved by the department, students will not be reimbursed for travel. It is recommended to receive approval before making any travel related expenses.
 - b. Depending on the student’s employment/student classification at the University, regulations regarding travel can vary. It is the responsibility of the student to check with their department to confirm their classification and the regulations around their particular travel situation.
 - c. UAB regulations must be followed for all travel and can change without notice. Please refer to the Financial Affairs Travel Guidelines for more information (<https://www.uab.edu/financialaffairs/traveling>).
2. The timeline to get your disbursement is dependent on the speed at which it gets processed to your student account. Under usual circumstances, your student account should reflect the requested amount within a month . **The Travel Grants Officer does NOT handle financial issues with reimbursement.** Questions regarding missing reimbursement should first be referred to Cynthia Ballinger in the Graduate School.

V. DEADLINES

1. **Only electronic applications** will be considered. A current schedule listing the application periods and their corresponding deadlines for applications are available on the GSG website (<https://www.uab.edu/gsg/funding/travel-grants>).
2. The application period occurs one semester prior to the award period. The application will be open for approximately two weeks. Exact dates are determined by the GSG Travel Grant Officer and are published on the GSG website (<https://www.uab.edu/gsg/funding/travel-grants>).



- a. No applications will be considered prior to the application period nor will any late applications be considered. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- b. **If a student who is set to receive the award and does not notify GSG within 1 semester of them not receiving their award (after it has been emailed, and stated in GSG meetings), the student will no longer be eligible to receive that award and will count as having received it once.**
 - a. Example: You are selected to receive the award in Spring 2023 and Fall 2024. You apply again in Fall 2025 because you never received your disbursement from 2023 in your student account. However, you never notified the GSG President, Treasurer, Awards Officer, or Grad School Financial officer of this problem, until you were told you were not eligible, because our records show that you received it twice.
 - i. You will not be eligible to receive any funds.

VI. STUDENT TRAVEL STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

1. As a graduate student travelling with financial assistance from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, (UAB) Graduate Student Government (GSG) I do, by my electronic signature on the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award”, acknowledge understanding that the GSG is intending to support the educational benefits of this event.
2. The expectation is that I will use these funds to attend the conference meetings, participate in the conference/training session processes, and contribute to the conference/training session aims. I understand I am a representative of my graduate program, UAB and the UAB GSG, and I agree to exemplify the professional nature of both the University and GSG while on my travels.
3. As a graduate student, I will include the GSG logo as a financial supporter and have the GSG logo on my poster or oral presentation. As well as provide proof in the form of a picture with my poster or oral presentation with the GSG logo within two weeks following travel. The picture will be emailed to the current Travel Grant Officer.
4. I also agree that UAB GSG will not be held liable for any damages to persons or property related to this travel.
5. By electronically signing the GSG Professional Development and Travel Award application, I indicate that:
 - a. I have read and understood the UAB GSG Professional Development and Travel Award Policies and Guidelines listed on the GSG website.
 - b. I understand that failure to conform to the policies and guidelines of this document as well as the UAB Financial Affairs department could result in rejection of my travel reimbursement and/or loss of eligibility for future GSG Award funding.



- c. I understand that providing false information to the GSG is a violation of the UAB Honor Code and could result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the University.

VII. STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE OF AWARD AGREEMENT

1. As a graduate student applying for financial assistance from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, (UAB) Graduate Student Government (GSG) I do, by my electronic signature on the “GSG Professional Development and Travel application”, acknowledge the understanding that the GSG is intending to support the educational benefits of this event.
2. I certify that I am an eligible graduate student for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” and have read and agreed to the guidelines.
3. I certify that I am an eligible graduate student for the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” and have read the eligibility requirements stated in **section II.**
4. I agree with responsible use of the award and will acknowledge the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” where appropriate.
5. By electronically signing the “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” application, I indicate that:
 - a. I have read and understood the UAB “GSG Professional Development and Travel Award” Policies and Guidelines listed on the GSG website.
 - b. I understand that failure to conform to the policies and guidelines of this document as well as the UAB Financial Affairs department could result in rejection of my reimbursement and/or loss of eligibility for future GSG funding.
 - c. I understand that providing false information to the GSG is a violation of the UAB Honor Code and could result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the University.



Revised: 8/21/25 Teresa Chiyanne Beamon