

UMCES Graduate Assistant Financial Quick Facts
 Updated July 2022

| Item | Source, Website, or Email Address |
|--|--|
| General Information | |
| UMCES Graduate Assistantship Policies (appointments, duties, tuition and fees) | http://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/III711UMCES_0.pdf |
| UMCP Graduate Catalog (policies and procedures) | https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/ |
| UMCES Student Resources | https://www.umces.edu/graduate-program-myumces |
| Deadlines, Calendars, Holidays, and Vacations | |
| Registration and graduation dates and deadlines | https://gradschool.umd.edu/calendar |
| UMCP Academic Calendar | https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/about-university/academic-calendar/semester-calendar/ |
| UMCES Holiday Calendar | Located on the UMCES Human Resources Website: https://www.umces.edu/human-resources |
| UMCP Bill and Tuition Remission | |
| Graduate Tuition and Fees | https://billpay.umd.edu/GraduateTuition |
| Ph.D. Candidacy Tuition | https://billpay.umd.edu/tuition-billing-tuition-and-fees/phd-candidacy-tuition-and-fees |
| Waive mandatory fees for semester | Linked here each semester: https://www.mees.umd.edu/the-foundations-1 |
| Mandatory Fee Issues | MEES Office: mees@umd.edu / 301-405-6938 |
| Access UMCP Bill/Account | Bursar's Office at UMCP: https://billpay.umd.edu/ |
| Tuition Remission Help | AL: Heather Johnson, 301-689-7200, hjohnson@umces.edu CBL: Stacy Hutchinson, 410-326-7364, shutchinson@umces.edu HPL: Addie Cropper, 410-221-8241, acropper@umces.edu IMET: Monica Gellene, 410-234-8898, mgellene@umces.edu |
| Policy regarding Tuition and fees (includes withdraw, dropping classes) | UMCP Policy on Tuition, fees, and expenses https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/tuition-fees-expenses/ |
| Charges for Withdraw/dropping a course | https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/tuition-fees-expenses/ |

FAQs

1. What is full time status and how do I maintain it if necessary?

A Graduate Assistant is on an academic appointment not involving academic tenure. The appointment may be full-time (20 hours per week) or half-time (10 hours per week). Full time GAs are required to be signed up for at least 48 units per semester. Assistantships are worth 24 units. GAs holding regular 20-hour appointments are considered full-time students by the University if they are registered for at least 24 units in a semester term or 18 units in a 12-week term program. GAs holding half (10-hour) assistantships must be full-time students. They are full-time students if they are registered for 36 units in a semester term or 27 units in a 12-week term program.

Please see this link for more information, including calculation of units:

<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/registration-policies/>

2. Do Graduate Assistants have to pay Retirement and Social Security (FICA) Taxes?

Retirement benefits are not withheld from the salaries of Graduate Assistants. GAs are exempt from Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA) taxes provided that they maintain enrollment and are registered with at least half-time status in the term (Semester or 12-week) they are holding an assistantship. During a summer term, if you take courses, you must inform the Bursar's Office and UMCES HR of this while maintaining at least half-time status during that term in order for the FICA exemption to be maintained, otherwise FICA taxes will be removed over the summer months.

3. Who is responsible for the tuition charges if I drop a course?

We recommend reviewing the Add/Drop/Withdrawal information on the UMCP website (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/tuition-fees-expenses/>) to assess whether you will be eligible for a refund and if so, for how much. Monetary credits will go back to the grant, and a student is responsible for any remainder charges due to withdrawals. We recommend you monitor your student account for potential charges if you decide to drop a course during or after the schedule adjustment period. Below is the schedule adjustment refund schedule. Students may drop and add courses without penalty provided that the changes are made on the same day and that the total number of credits does not change or it increases. If you are making an equal switch of credits, but, for instance, trading a 3 credit course for a 1 credit course and a 2 credit course, you will need to contact the MEES Office.

| Withdrawal | Refund |
|--|-------------|
| Prior to the first day of classes - no charge | 100% refund |
| During the Schedule Adjustment Period - 20% charge | 80% refund |
| After the Schedule Adjustment Period - 100% charge | 0% refund |
| Tuition Reimbursement | |

4. As a Ph.D. Candidate, I am automatically signed up for 6 credits of MEES899. What are the tuition costs for MEES899?

MEES899 has a flat tuition fee. Please see this website for an explanation of MEES899 charges: <https://billpay.umd.edu/tuition-billing-tuition-and-fees/phd-candidacy-tuition-and-fees>

5. Please explain mandatory fee waivers. What does it cover and am I eligible for the fee waiver?

UMCES students in the MEES Program residing at UMCES laboratories or units are eligible for the mandatory fee waiver during the fall and spring semesters, provided they agree to not use any services covered by the mandatory fees, as outlined [here](#). Each semester, the MEES Office will send an email with eligibility requirements and a form to fill out if eligible. Access to software located on Terpware is covered by tuition and not mandatory fees. Notes: students taking summer credits are not eligible for the mandatory fee waiver and mandatory fees are not able to be covered by grants.

6. If I receive a Dean's Fellowship from UMD, are there stipulations in how the money is used?

No. For students who receive the UMD Dean's Fellowship, the money is deposited into their student accounts and students can use this money how they wish.

7. How do finances work if I sign up for a credit during the summer semester?

To register for a summer research credit, students must contact the MEES Office for registration information. Summer courses can be found on Testudo. Students should contact their local HR representative to ensure

tuition remission is paid for the summer. Students are not able to request a waiver of mandatory fees during the summer semester; summer mandatory fees are different than fall and spring semester fees and are outlined on the [UMD extended studies website](#). During a summer term, if you take courses, you must inform the Bursar's Office and UMCES HR of this while maintaining at least half-time status during that term in order for the FICA exemption to be maintained, otherwise FICA taxes will be removed over the summer months.

8. If I am coming off of my GRA appointment and have to pay for a credit(s) myself, is there anything I should do?

Please check your residency classification to see if you are considered a Maryland resident. Graduate Assistants who were admitted as out-of-state students are assessed tuition at the in-state rate, only as a benefit of their employment. All out-of-state graduate assistants who have met all residency requirements and wish to change their status to in-state must file a timely petition with the Residency Reclassification Services in accordance with Policy requirements. This website at UMD has more information, including contact email addresses: <https://www.registrar.umd.edu/resreclass.html>. Once you are no longer considered a GRA, you will be billed at the rate of either in-state or out-of-state tuition, based on what classification you were initially granted on your UMD admission letter. If you are considered an out-of-state resident but feel you meet the outlined criteria and are eligible for in-state tuition, you can apply to try to obtain a residency reclassification through the process outlined on the UMD website. We recommend fully reading the [FAQs](#) and emailing the residency office regarding your status and any questions you may have.

Please do not hesitate to contact Amy Griffin (agriffin@umces.edu / 410-326-7211) or the MEES Office (mees@umd.edu / 301-405-6938) if you have any questions.