ICR Student Funding
Spring 2016

The College of Media will provide three years of funding for Institute of Communications doctoral students with 50% appointments. That three years of support typically entails students working as Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants.

At least in the short term, there likely will be extremely limited College funding available to those students who have completed three years of guaranteed support from the College. The ICR administration is working with the Dean of the College on a formula that would allow certain students beyond their third year to be self-sufficient as Teaching Assistants within the College. In the meantime, students beyond their third year should pursue additional funding options: for example, fellowships (either given by the University of Illinois or by another institution or organization), research assistantships with ICR faculty who have secured external funding, or teaching or research assistantships in other University of Illinois departments or colleges. ICR distributes a weekly newsletter during the school year that identifies many potential sources of outside funding. You also may consult the Graduate College Funding and Employment website (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/funding-jobs).

Some travel money is available through ICR and the Graduate College as well as from other sources. We will inform all students when specific funding opportunities avail themselves. The amount of travel support is calculated in part from the number of applications that are submitted in any given semester, from the competitive process and prestige of the conference that the student is attending, and from the distance traveled to the conference. In general, competitively accepted research papers at top-ranked conferences (for example, the International Communication Association, National Communication Association, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, American Academy of Advertising, etc.) are the most likely to garner financial support. For campus-wide competitions, a student’s overall record and portfolio (as reflected by such things as GRE scores, timely progress toward degree completion, level of research productivity, clarity of research proposal, reference letters, etc.) are taken into account.

Teaching Assistantships can include assisting a professor with a large lecture-style class, teaching a section of a class for which the syllabus is more or less fixed, or teaching an upper-level course as the instructor of record with the syllabus having been approved by a faculty member. Teaching assignments are made according to criteria that include but are not limited to a student’s prior teaching experience and the teaching needs of the individual units of the College.

ICR student funding remains on a par with peer programs in our field and other units in the humanities and social sciences at the University of Illinois. We will continue to make every effort—individually and collectively—to secure external sources of funding, and we will strive as much as possible to be democratic, transparent, and distributive in our funding approach.