7. Funding

7.1 Graduate School Funding

- Graduate Fellowships

All students admitted to the doctoral program will receive full tuition and a base stipend of $26,000 which includes health insurance and student activity fees. Beyond this, Vanderbilt University's Graduate School offers a number of so-called topping stipends, all of which are merit-based and competitive (see below). Qualifying students are nominated at the admissions stage. Amounts and conditions for each of these additional stipends varies. Stipends are paid out on a 12-month schedule and are limited to a period of 5 years.

- The University Graduate Fellowship (UGF) is a $5,000 three-year topping-up award, renewable for two additional years. This award is given to students entering the doctoral program and is renewable for up to five years on a competitive basis. Its continuance is contingent upon satisfactory progress toward the degree. UGF awards are competitive among applicants to all graduate programs at the University.

- The Provost's Graduate Fellowship (PGF) is a $5,000 annual topping-up award that supplements the student's base stipend for up to five years (three years initially and renewable for two). The PGF is merit-based and recognizes students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. PGF awards are competitive among applicants to all graduate programs at the University.

Students’ financial support may be terminated if the Graduate Studies Committee, in its annual review of all graduate students, finds that insufficient progress is being made toward the degree.
(e.g., un-met course or language requirements, one of more "incompletes" or “unsatisfactories,” poor academic evaluations).

- **Travel Grants**

Students may apply for three Graduate School Travel Grants (maximum one per year) over their five-year tenure in the program. Grants are limited up to $500 per trip for foreign or domestic travel. The applicant must be the sole presenter of research at a major regional, national, or international conference.

**7.2 College of Arts and Science Funding**

- **Summer Research Awards (SRAs)**

The SRA program is designed to help graduate students with outstanding potential to accelerate progress on their research. SRAs provide funds for research expenses related to the doctoral thesis, other advanced research projects, or scholarly activities that significantly advance professional development. Doctoral students in good standing are eligible for the SRA. A student may receive this award **no more than twice** during his/her career at Vanderbilt.

SRAs are granted on a competitive basis. Students may request awards of up to $3,000. In determining the amount of each award, the Committee on Graduate Education will consider the degree of need demonstrated by the proposal and budget, the number of successful applications, and the total available funds. Award funds will either be provided directly to vendors upon receipt of an invoice or will be provided to award recipients in the form of reimbursement for expenses. Funds are intended to support students’ work for the dissertation, dissertation proposal, or other scholarly projects.
Application materials: 2-page maximum CV; 1-2 page proposal; detailed budget (which the applicants submits to the DGS office as a single PDF); two 1-page letters of support, one from a faculty member who will supervise the proposed research (to be submitted to the DGS in advance of the deadline); SRA Cover Sheet filled out by the DGS. Because DGSs forward applications to the Dean’s office, all applicants should contact DGSs well in advance of the March deadline, note an intention to submit an application, and request a date by which to submit their materials to the DGS.

- **Summer Language Training Grants**
  Awards up to $5,000 to study a foreign language in another country. Doctoral students in good standing are eligible. Application deadlines in early spring. Award funds will either be provided directly to vendors upon receipt of an invoice or will be provided to award recipients in the form of reimbursement for expenses.

- The Center for Teaching offers a one-year [Graduate Teaching Fellows Program](#).

- **Dissertation Fellowships**
  One-year dissertation fellowships are available each on a competitive basis from the Robert Penn Warren Humanities Center (RPW). Deadlines in early spring.

### 7.3 Department-sponsored Funding

- **The Drake Series**
  The annual endowed Drake Series, which typically occurs in March, is designed to give graduate students extended contact with world-class scholars in diverse fields. The Drake speaker is in residence for 3-5 days, during which they give one formal public lecture and meet with graduate students in more informal settings. Drake visitors usually meet with groups of students to discuss
their scholarly interests and to conduct a seminar either on their own work-in-progress or on a published essay. Both are circulated in advance.

The Drake Series has a special feature: the English Department also provides funding for one to two graduate student to reciprocate the Drake speaker’s visit by spending some time working under his/her loose supervision at their home institution. In the past, this has meant a summer visit during which students do have the opportunity to do research at local archives. Applications for this opportunity are due in early April. Interested students submit a 1-2 page description of how such a visit would enhance their dissertation work and a detailed budget to Anna Jones in the DGS office by April 15. All applications are must be submitted electronically. In the case of multiple applicants, the Graduate Studies Committee will make a selection based on plausibility and merit of the proposal.

- **Summer Institutes**

The English Department regularly funds students’ participation in several summer institutes with which we are affiliated. Interested students submit the following electronically to Anna Jones at the DGS office by January 3: a one-page description of how attending one of the following institutes would benefit their graduate career and a detailed budget. The information about Dickens Universe tends to come in during January, which changes the application deadline for this institute to February 1. In the case of multiple applicants, the Graduate Studies Committee will make a selection based on plausibility and merit of the proposal.

- [The School of Criticism and Theory](#) (SCT)
- [The Institute of World Literature](#) (IWL)
- Dickens Universe
• The Folger Institute at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. The Folger programs tend to be highly competitive. However, if you are admitted, you will automatically receive a Grant-in-Aid to subsidize travel and lodging costs.

Although we are not affiliated with either Birkbeck University, participation in the London Critical Theory Summer School may be combined with a Drake program visit. Similarly, research visits to New York City might be combined with participation in the summer seminars offered by the Institute for Critical Social Inquiry (ICSI) at the New School.

• Professional Development Funding

The Department’s Myers Endowment Fund supports professional development with awards up to $1,000. This funding is meant to supplement the opportunities available from the Graduate School, such as Travel Fellowships and Summer Research Awards (SRAs), to which students should apply first (unless they are not yet or no longer eligible). Eligible projects may focus on research, teaching, or other forms of professional development. Grants from this fund might support visits to archives, pedagogical development opportunities, specific research toward your dissertation or a publication, conference attendance not covered by existing resources (see above), or other projects that advance scholarly, pedagogical, or professional goals. Priority is given to proposals that clearly advance a student’s research, teaching, and/or professional agenda.

Calls for applications will be posted every year in October and March. To apply, students submit a description of the proposed project, a brief rationale that situates the project in relation to the overall development of teaching, scholarship, or professional development, and a detailed budget to Anna Jones in the DGS office. Part of the application must be a brief
explanation of how the applicant has pursued other funding avenues, be they internal or external.

- **Research Assistantships (RAs)**
  Beginning in the second year, graduate students who are either in need of extra money or have reached their award limit may sometimes, with the authorization of the DGS, earn an hourly wage as RA for a faculty member.

- **Academic Job Search Support**
  The Department of English has a thorough program of mentoring and advising students seeking academic employment. This includes a grant to support travel and lodging at the annual MLA conference, if a candidate has been invited to job interviews there.