What is this guide?
This guide outlines costs associated with attending ASU as a graduate or professional student. It includes information about direct costs (those charged by the university) like tuition and fees, and indirect costs including the cost of living and taxes. Some information about graduate student employment and funding are also highlighted.

Why did GPSA make this guide?
GPSA created this guide as a 'one-stop-shop' for basic information about finances at ASU. The guide is meant for prospective and current students alike. Please note this document is not the “be all, end all” to determine your cost of attendance at ASU. Each student should consult with their department and Financial Aid and Scholarship Services about their specific situation.

The information contained in this guide is located publicly, either on the ASU website or other public sites. However, this guide seeks to collate that information into one central place.

What is GPSA?
The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is the official student government for ASU’s graduate and professional student community. GPSA provides support, resources, and advocacy for graduate students at ASU.

Looking for something specific?

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Direct Costs

Tuition
Many factors affect the amount of tuition graduate and professional students pay. These include residency status (in state, out of state, international), number of credits, and enrollment in an in-person vs. online or hybrid program. For a breakdown of tuition costs, see https://catalog.asu.edu/tuitionandfees/

Program fees
Program fees support particular degree programs. Departments request specific fees associated with their program to cover specific program costs, like equipment, labs, or travel associated with program requirements. Program fees must receive approval from the Arizona Board of Regents, or ABOR, when ASU proposes tuition updates every spring. ABOR accepts student feedback on fee and tuition proposals. These are not the same as class fees, which cover resources specific to those classes. Students pay class fees only if they are enrolled in a course associated with a fee.

Generally, these fees are charged on a per-semester or per-credit basis. A list of those fees is available here: https://students.asu.edu/fqprogramfees

For most programs, 17% of all program fees go toward student financial aid. Students who submit a FAFSA and who demonstrate financial need are eligible to be considered for financial aid from their program. For more, see ASU's financial aid information.

Mandatory fees
Mandatory fees are fees that all graduate and professional students have to pay, though some online students might be exempt. A chart of the mandatory fees with descriptions about what programs they support is available on the next page. Mandatory fees and changes to those fees must be approved and periodically reviewed by ABOR. Some RA/TA packages cover mandatory fees. Ask your department for more information.

Something you should know: GPSA leadership has a seat at the table when new mandatory fees are proposed or existing fees are reexamined. Sidebar: For a breakdown of what fees and tuition you paid, see your MyASU Finances page.

Health Insurance
Most students are eligible to purchase ASU health insurance. Some students, such as international students are required to have health insurance. Some RA and TA positions include health insurance or provide a stipend to help you purchase it yourself. Details about ASU health insurance are available here: https://gpsa.asu.edu/departments/president/professional-development/health-insurance-guide/
<table>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount per semester</th>
<th>Implemented</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Resident Surcharge</td>
<td>Varies with number of credits ($19-$135)</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>The Resident Surcharge fee helps ASU offset state budget reductions. Fun fact: Arizona’s contribution to state universities declined about 50%, more than any other state, between 2008-2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPSA Student Programs Fee</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Pays for GPSA expenses including events for graduate students, funding available to students, and graduate student center facilities and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Trust Fee</td>
<td>&lt;6 credits - $27 7+ credits - $49</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Charged to students at all Arizona Universities, the Financial Aid Trust Fund supports a grant program to support students with financial need and to create an endowment for future aid. Fees collected from students are required to be matched by the State of Arizona. This fee was introduced in 1989 at all state-funded Arizona universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Fee</td>
<td>&lt;6 credits - $12 7+ credits - $25</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Supports services and programs at the Sun Devil Fitness Complexes on all campuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Academic support Fee (Previously Technology Fee)</td>
<td>&lt;6 credits - $62 7+ credits - $125 1 credit - $50</td>
<td>2007, Combined and increased in Spring 2018</td>
<td>Supports expanded ASU technology services, including software licenses for students and improved wireless networks: <a href="https://uto.asu.edu/">https://uto.asu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Programs Fee</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>For graduate students, this fee supports programs like GPSA’s travel grants, awards, professional development workshops, and graduate student organization funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellness Fee</td>
<td>&lt;6 credits - $28 7+ credits - $55</td>
<td>2009, Increased in Spring 2018</td>
<td>Supports ASU Health Services, including primary care services and staff, counseling services, and travel medicine services. [include link to this page: <a href="https://eoss.asu.edu/health">https://eoss.asu.edu/health</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Service Facility Fee</td>
<td>&lt;6 credits - $37 7+ credits - $75</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Supports improvements to existing student facilities, including the Student Pavilion, renovations to Hayden Library, and improvements to Sun Devil Fitness Complexes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Visa Admin Fee</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Supports the legal fees required to maintain a legal immigrant status for international students. Note: This is only charged to international students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Athletics Fee</td>
<td>&lt;6 credits - $37 7+ credits - $75</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Supports student access to Athletics events. When negotiated, the fee insured that tuition revenue would only support academic programs and services including support for TA and RA stipends and benefits.</td>
</tr>
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* Continuing Registration Credit
**Housing**
The average rent for an apartment in Tempe is $1,258 (with an average size of 923 square feet) as of October 2018. Listed below are the prices based on the number of bedrooms in an apartment:
- Studio: $936
- One-bedroom: $1,030
- Two-bedroom: $1,236

Online students not residing in the Valley should consider their town's cost of living.

**Childcare**
There are a variety of options for childcare available on and around ASU. For resources on choosing childcare options, you can visit the following ASU page: [https://eoss.asu.edu/students-families/offcampus](https://eoss.asu.edu/students-families/offcampus)

GPSA funds financial assistance for student parents. Student parents may apply for the Sun Devil Child Care Subsidy of $500 per semester for childcare: [https://eoss.asu.edu/students-families/financial](https://eoss.asu.edu/students-families/financial)

You may be eligible to apply for Arizona's Head Start program for your child. Check the Arizona Department of Education website for eligibility. [http://www.azed.gov/ece/head-start/](http://www.azed.gov/ece/head-start/)

The median weekly cost of childcare in Arizona ranges from $140-$220. In Maricopa County, the median weekly cost is $150-$225. Source: [2018 Arizona Department of Economic Security Market Survey](https://eoss.asu.edu/students-families/offcampus)

**Transit**

**Bus and light rail pass:** ASU and Valley Metro offer discounted bus and light rail passes: $150 for the academic year and $75 for the summer months: [https://cfo.asu.edu/transit](https://cfo.asu.edu/transit)

**Intercampus shuttles:** ASU operates a free intercampus shuttle system (coach-style buses with air conditioning, heating, and free wifi): [https://cfo.asu.edu/shuttles](https://cfo.asu.edu/shuttles)

**Free circulator busses:** Within Tempe, there are options for free bus transportation on the Tempe ORBIT and FLASH and the Mesa Downtown BUZZ.

**Parking:** An ASU Parking Permit costs between $210-$780 per year depending on the campus. Check the ASU website for up-to-date prices for annual permits: [https://cfo.asu.edu/parking](https://cfo.asu.edu/parking)

**Alternative parking:** Alternatives to on-campus parking are increasingly common and are often more affordable. Please exercise caution when engaging in private transactions for near-campus parking, such as those found on Craigslist or app-based solutions, such as [AirGarage](https://cfo.asu.edu/parking).

**International students:** Some housing applications require job offer letters (such as RA/TA assistantships or fellowships) at the time of lease application. If you are unsure how to get this, please contact GPSA as we are here to help advocate and guide you through various processes.
Food
ASU estimates average expected spending on meals for the school year in the table found at the following link: https://students.asu.edu/standard-cost-attendance

ASU employees, including RAs or TAs, are eligible for the faculty & staff discount on dining hall meal plans. https://sundevildining.asu.edu/meal-plans/faculty-staff-meal-plans

If you or someone you know is struggling with hunger or regular access to nutritious food, please consider the following resources:
- The Borderlands Produce Rescue hosts weekly produce markets around the Valley. Take home up to 70 lbs of produce for a $12 donation: https://www.borderlandsproducerescue.org/produce-on-wheels/
- United Food Bank in Mesa offers 15-20 pounds of produce and meat for $20. They are open every Friday from 8 am-noon. https://unitedfoodbank.org/get-help/help-yourself-purchase-cooperative/
- Alternately, Pitchfork Pantry is a Sun Devil-founded-and-operated food pantry open to all ASU students. They are currently located on Tempe and Downtown campuses: https://www.facebook.com/PitchforkPantry1/

Discounts
Many local businesses provide discounts for students. Below are a few popular discounts. Look for a more extensive list from GPSA in Spring 2019
- Discounts at Tempe Marketplace for students https://tempemarketplace.com/asu/
- Harkins Theater and Alamo Drafthouse (discounted non-matinee tickets)
- ASU Gammage Student Rush tickets (50% off show tickets purchased on the day of the show) https://www.asugammage.com/students
- Miscellaneous goods and services: https://cfo.asu.edu/miscellaneous-goods-and-services
Graduate Student Employment & Funding

There are five primary avenues for employment and four avenues for funding packages for graduate and professional students at ASU. The information below can be found in the Teaching/Research Assistant/Associate Handbook:

**Research Assistantships (RA)**
Many professors offer Research Assistantships from research funding to involve students on specific research projects. Half-time RAs (20 hours per week) offer tuition remission while 25% RAs (10 hours per week) offer half tuition remission. A tuition remission means that the recipient does not have to pay tuition costs out of pocket. In other words, a portion or all of the recipient's tuition is paid by the RA. RA stipends are generally set at a rate suggested by the department but can be negotiated with the professor. Fees are generally not included in tuition remission coverage.

Note: Some positions may be eligible for full-time employment (40 hours per week) during the summer.

**Teaching Assistantships (TA)**
Many departments offer Teaching Assistantships. Fifty percent TAs, employed for 20 hours per week, are offered full tuition coverage along with a stipend. Twenty five percent TAs are offered half tuition coverage along with a stipend and are employed for 10 hours per week. TAs are generally fixed by the department and are not negotiated individually.

**Fellowships**
Fellowships are offered by various organizations and can be used to pay for tuition and expenses. Popular fellowship opportunities include Fulbright and National Science Foundation, but your department can provide opportunities specific to your field. See ASU's Office of National Scholarship Advancement for more information.

**Graduate Service Assistant (GSA)**
Graduate Service Assistants (GSAs) have similar responsibilities to RAs and TAs but are not always offered the same benefits such as tuition remission and health insurance. The remuneration can be negotiated with the advisor. GSAs are often offered to students towards the end of their degree program when they are enrolled in dissertation or thesis credits. The rate is often increased to cover the additional expenses of tuition and insurance.

**Hourly jobs**
On campus jobs are available for students and can be found at https://students.asu.edu/employment/search. The jobs are paid on an hourly basis and the compensation is about $10.50 to $15 per hour. Tuition reimbursement is not available with these jobs.
Please note
RA and TA positions are often offered on a semester basis. TA applications are generally released prior to the beginning of the next semester (check with your department on timelines and deadlines). International students: Many positions might require a SPEAK test. Learn more here.

Tuition and health insurance costs vary for resident, non-resident, and international students.

Summer funding
TA and RA positions for summer are offered to graduate students separately of fall and spring positions. TA/RAs are expected to be registered for at least 1 credit. Summer funding is not guaranteed in all programs.

Do TA and RA stipends change?
Yes. Under current agreements between ASU and GPSA, RA and TA minimum stipends are updated every two years based on the cost of living over a 9-month (two-semester) period. Those rates also apply to summer RA and TAs [get clarification]

University President Crow made a commitment to GPSA in Spring 2014 to implement a multi-year plan to align the minimum teaching assistant stipend at ASU with the Maricopa County entry hourly wage or “living wage,” as it sometimes labeled. The university created a plan to achieve alignment by 2021-22. The plan will be updated and reconciled each year to incorporate changes in the actual living wage rate and to maintain that alignment after 2021-22.

Taxes
While we want to be helpful, we (GPSA) are not tax advisors or certified tax professionals, your situation may differ. You may or may not be liable for taxes on your graduate funding package, depending on your individual situation. We encourage you to work with a certified tax professional or tax advisor regarding your specific situation.

Here are some things you can consider in your conversations with your certified tax professional:
- Some graduate students will be exempt from FICA taxes based on their annual earnings.
- International students can visit the International Student Services Center to learn more about how to get in touch with a tax advisor who specializes in international student tax questions. Learn more here.
- A note for students with external (non-ASU) fellowships: Taxes and tax rules on these fellowships vary widely.
- Withholding rates (how much is taken out of your paycheck) will affect your ‘take home’ pay. Factors like your annual household income, whether you’re married or have children will affect both your withholding and any exemptions you can claim.
Financial Aid and Student Loans

To learn about financial aid opportunities at ASU, be sure to submit your FAFSA each year beginning Oct 1 for the following academic year, even if you already have an RA or TA or other financial support. ASU uses information from your FAFSA, such as your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and a Cost of Attendance (COA) to determine if you’re eligible for need based assistance or access to loans. COA is comprised of the following components: tuition, fees, housing, meals, books/supplies, personal, travel, and loan fees. Reminder: Students with demonstrable financial need may be eligible for need-based aid. A portion of many program fees goes towards financial aid resources.

Graduate students might be eligible for Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford and Federal Direct PLUS loans. Learn more about the different types of Federal financial loans at: https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans

iGrad

iGrad is ASU’s financial health and wellness partner and can be accessed via your My ASU homepage or at www.asu.edu/go/igrad. iGrad offers a robust platform to learn about financial wellness topics like budgeting, investing, student loan repayment, and saving toward big life goals.

Still have questions?

- See more details about tuition and fees on your MyASU Finances page: http://my.asu.edu/finances
- Ask your department about available TA and RA positions
- Ask for an example TA, RA, or GSA contract from your school you know what to look for when you receive a TA, RA, or GSA offer
- Reach out to GPSA: We have representatives on every campus. We may not know the answer to a specific question about finances but we can help point you find someone on campus that will: https://gpsa.asu.edu/

This document was drafted by the GPSA Special Project Committee in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. Though not guaranteed, GPSA intends to update it on a regular basis.