



**Idaho State  
University**

**Graduate  
School**

# **GTA HANDBOOK**

**AY 22-23**

**Graduate School | (208) 282-2150 | [isu.edu/graduate](https://isu.edu/graduate)**

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# Introduction

This handbook will keep you informed of important policies and procedures related to appointment to a graduate assistantship or doctoral fellowship at Idaho State University. It also contains important tips and reminders about navigating the process of obtaining, keeping, and maintaining a funded position as a graduate student at ISU.

The ISU Graduate School website contains some of this information as well as additional information about being a graduate student at ISU. <https://www.isu.edu/graduate/>

Any suggestions or concerns about this handbook should be directed to the Graduate School at [gradschool@isu.edu](mailto:gradschool@isu.edu)

## Types of Assistantships

The availability of these funding opportunities varies between department, program, and supervising faculty. This section will help you understand the distinction between types of funding awarded and the processes that differ between them. Assistantships and Fellowships at Idaho State University are competitively awarded each year. Being awarded funding is an indication of the potential that your department sees for your individual academic and professional growth. Care should be taken to understand and fulfill all expectations and duties of the funding offered.

Graduate Assistantships and Doctoral Fellowships (often just casually referred to as a “TAship” or “funding” provide a graduate student with funding to attend their graduate program as well as important teaching, research, or administrative experience. These sources of funding typically come with a full waiver of tuition as well as a living stipend (amounts vary). Other fees are not covered by the waiver.

Below, we have outlined the primary types of funding available to graduate students at Idaho State University.

### *Graduate Assistantships (GA)*

There are about 250 GAs available for the entire university; most of these require serving as an instructor for a department.

An individual department may have only two or three assistantships to award. Most of these are awarded late spring semester for the next academic year.

Full-time GAs are expected to work 20 hours/week for their stipend. Contact departmental chair or graduate program directors for application materials.

Graduate assistants who are international students, whose native language is not English, and who have been assigned to teach may be asked to complete an English speaking proficiency examination administered by the Student Success Center.

Normally, graduate assistants are involved in classroom instruction, supervision of laboratory sections, grading papers and/or examinations, assisting faculty members in research activities, or other equivalent duties.

### *Research Assistantships (RA)*

Research Assistantships are available throughout the university through grant monies or other external sources. Conditions of employment and amounts of compensation vary. Questions about such sources of support should be directed to the academic departments or colleges.

### *Fellowships*

There are about 25 Doctor of Art Fellowships awarded each year to students admitted to and enrolled in the Doctor of Arts program.

These are available only in the Departments of Biological Sciences, English, Mathematics and Political Science. Most of these are awarded late spring-early summer each year. Contact these departments via the information in the table below for details and applications.

Please be aware the entire DA fellowship award (tuition/fee scholarship and the monthly stipend) is disbursed as scholarships so will impact a student's federal financial aid eligibility.

Also note that fellowships are processed as a scholarship, not as an employment salary. You may owe state and federal income taxes on fellowship stipends. Idaho State University does not currently offer withholding on fellowship disbursements. Fellowship recipients should be aware of their specific tax situation and any taxes owed on fellowship income when filing yearly tax returns.

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Biological Sciences	Life Sciences Bldg.	(208) 282-3765
English	Liberal Arts Bldg.	(208) 282-2478
Mathematics	Physical Sciences Bldg.	(208) 282-3350
Political Science	Business Admin. Bldg.	(208) 282-2211

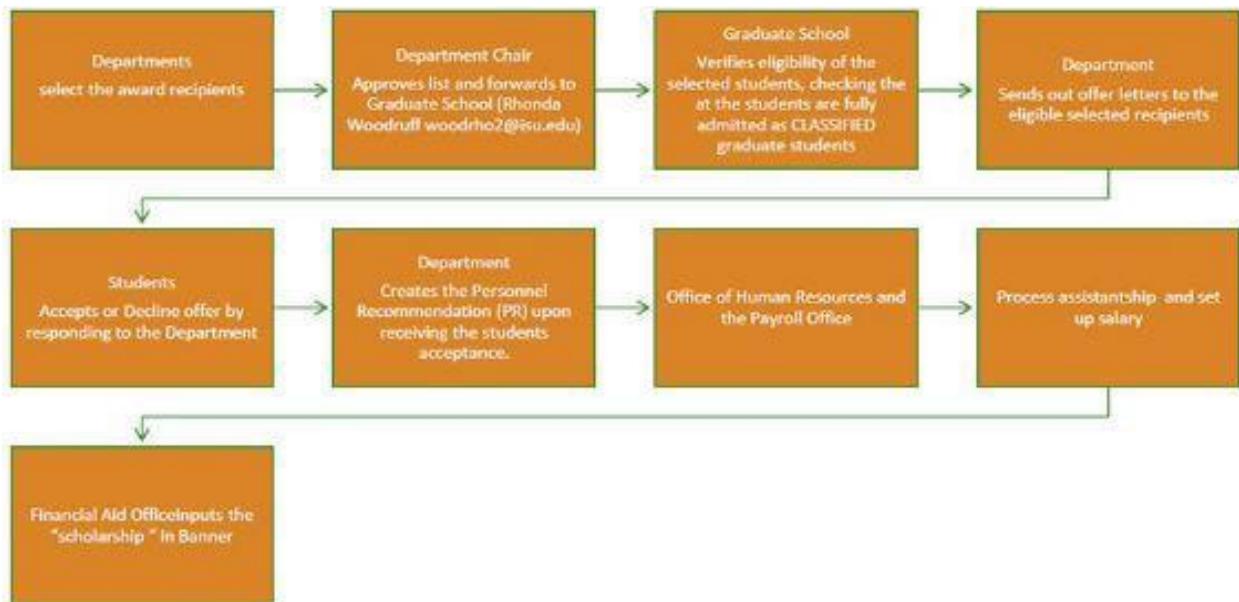
## **Appointment Process**

All assistantships and fellowships are awarded at the departmental or college level (for example, Business, Engineering, Pharmacy). Requests for consideration of these awards should be directed to the department chair or graduate program director of a specific academic unit. Check your departmental website for specific funding application information, or direct questions to your department chair.

Most assistantships and fellowships are awarded on an academic year basis. These awards are made in mid-semester in the spring for the following academic year.

To ensure consideration, a request for such financial support should be made to the academic unit by **February**.

Only students admitted as degree-seeking students are eligible to apply for graduate assistantships or fellowships. **Non-degree-seeking students are not eligible to receive assistantships.**



### *Reappointment and Non-reappointment*

Processes for reappointment are determined by the department that made the original offer of funding. Consult with your Graduate Director or Department Chair to make sure you are following all procedures to continue your appointment into future academic years.

Note that GAs and Fellows who do not meet the expectations of their department in performing their assigned duties may not be reappointed in future academic years. Processes related to GA/Fellow disciplinary actions are handled through the Graduate School.

## **Eligibility Expectations**

### *Satisfactory Academic Progress*

To retain financial support as a graduate student, almost all sources of funds require that the student must maintain satisfactory academic progress.

For graduate assistantships and fellowships, students ordinarily must earn nine graduate credit hours or more each semester and maintain a 3.0 grade point average. Some departments may require additional evidence of satisfactory progress for a student to remain eligible to receive assistantship or fellowship support.

Students who receive financial aid through the Financial Aid Office must meet the criteria established by that office for satisfactory progress to remain eligible for further aid.

### *Minimum/Maximum Course Credit Hours*

Because full-time graduate assistants are expected to work **up to 20 hours per week**, the **maximum** number of credits an assistant may earn in a given semester is **12**. Normally, a full-time graduate assistant is expected to carry a minimum of **9** graduate credits, which is a full-time load. **DA Fellows** are expected to carry a minimum of **9** graduate credits per semester.

Permission to carry fewer than **9 or more than 12 credits** may be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School upon written recommendation of the student's advisor or program director. However, since the Idaho State Board of Education requires that graduate assistants be full-time fee-paying students, graduate assistants who are approved to take fewer than full-time graduate credits will still be charged full-time tuition/fees.

### *Work Policy*

A student with a graduate assistantship or fellowship may be employed by the university for compensation in addition to the awarded stipend. This employment may only occur with permission of the Dean of the Graduate School and usually must be limited to **10** hours per week. Requests for permission for such employment must be sent in writing by the department chair or graduate program director to the Director of the Graduate School.

### **PUT IN TEXTBOX SIDEBAR: COVID-19 Pandemic Response Information for GAs and Fellows**

Idaho State University takes precautions against the spread of COVID-19 on campus seriously. The following links contain information that is important to the health and safety of everyone at ISU. The guidelines and policies in these links must be followed by all GAs and Fellows.

Roaring Back for Faculty and Staff: <https://www.isu.edu/roaringback/faculty-and-staff/>  
More specific guidelines: <https://www.isu.edu/media/top-level/coronavirus/Roaring-Back-Employee-Operations-Rebound-Plan-4-Guidelines.pdf>  
Roaring Back FAQ: <https://www.isu.edu/roaringback/faq/>

## **FERPA- General FERPA Information**

**Please note:** The following is not intended to be a legal opinion from the university but is provided as an overview of relevant provisions. Unique factual circumstances may result in legal consequences that vary from any inference suggested from this summary.

FERPA, also known as the “Buckley Amendment,” is a federal law enacted in 1974 which affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. A general overview of the law is stated below.

Some of the exceptions to disclosing personally-identifiable information are not part of the law itself but are exceptions created through other laws.

### **Who has to comply with FERPA?**

Educational institutions (schools or other entities that provide educational services and are attended by students) and educational agencies (entities that administer schools directly linked to them) that receive funds under any program administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

### **Who has FERPA rights at the post secondary level?**

A student “in attendance” (regardless of age - even if under 18) and former students.

### **What are these rights?**

- The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the university receives a request for access. Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The university official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the university official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- Right to seek the amendment of education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the university to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the university official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the university decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the university will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally-identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the university has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a student assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- Right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Idaho State University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

### **What are records under FERPA?**

Education records are defined as records that are directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

Education records are not: sole possession records, law enforcement unit records, employment records, medical records, or post-attendance records.

### **What are the requirements of FERPA for colleges?**

- Annual Model Notification of Rights (schools must notify students of their rights on an annual basis).
- Protect students' rights to inspect and review records.
- Protect students' rights to amend records.
- Protect students' right to limit disclosure of personally-identifiable information contained in education records.
- Ensure that third parties do not re-disclose personally-identifiable information, except under a few circumstances.
- Keep records of requests for and disclosures of student education records.

### **What are the exceptions that allow colleges to disclose "personally identifiable" information?**

With prior consent of the student:

- Directory information: Information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed:
  - Institution must designate information as directory information
  - Institution must provide notice to students regarding release of this information
- To authorized representatives of the following government entities:
  - Comptroller General of the United States
  - Secretary of Education
  - U.S. Attorney General for law enforcement purposes
  - State and local educational authorities - These officials may have access to the information only if it is in connection with an audit or evaluation of federal or state-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements which relate to these programs.
- To agents acting on behalf of the institution (e.g. Clearinghouses)
- To schools in which the students seek or intend to enroll
- In connection with financial aid
- To organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of educational institutions
- To accrediting organizations for accrediting purposes
- To parents of a dependent student
- To comply with a judicial order or subpoena
- Health or safety emergency
- To the student
- Results of a disciplinary hearing to an alleged victim of a crime of violence
- Final results of a disciplinary hearing against an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non forcible sex offense (Foley Amendment)
- To parents/legal guardians when their children (under 21) are found to have violated the alcohol or drug policy of the institution (Warner Amendment)
- To the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for purposes of the Coordinated Interagency partnership regulating international students



- “Student Recruiting Information” to military recruiters for recruiting purposes only (Solomon Amendment). Student recruiting information is name, address, telephone listing, age (or year of birth), level of education, and major
- To the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for purposes of complying with the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997
- To authorized representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs for students receiving educational assistance from the agency

### **What Happens if a College Does Not comply with FERPA?**

The Department of Education may issue a notice to cease the practice in question and could ultimately withhold funds administered by the Secretary of Education. However, as a practical matter, the Family Policy Compliance Office has never withheld funds because voluntary compliance has always been secured.

## **Title IX Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Idaho State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, or sexual orientation in its education programs or activities. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. It reads: *"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."* -Legal Citation: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX). Title IX protects all people regardless of their gender or gender identity from sex discrimination, which includes sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.

- **Sexual Discrimination** refers to an adverse act of sexual discrimination (including sexual harassment and sexual assault) that is perpetrated against an individual on a basis prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations.
- **Sexual Harassment** is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that includes, but is not limited to:
  1. Sexual violence
  2. Sexual advances
  3. Requests for sexual favors
  4. Indecent exposure
  5. Verbal, nonverbal or physical unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature

These actions are considered sexual harassment when such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that its effect, whether or not intended, is considered to be limiting the individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by the university. Acts of verbal, non-verbal or physical aggression, intimidation or hostility if based on gender or gender-stereotyping may be considered sexual harassment, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

- Other Sexual Misconduct refers to a physical sexual act that includes, but is not limited to:
  1. Assault
  2. Battery

3. Unwelcome touching
4. Rape
5. Sexual violence

These acts may be perpetrated against an individual who has not given consent or against an individual who is incapable of giving consent, due to the use of drugs, alcohol, or other incapacitation.

### **Retaliation**

Any person who brings forward a complaint or participates in an investigation is protected from retaliation to the full extent of the law.

### *9 Things to Know about Title IX*

1. Title IX is not just about sports. Title IX is a landmark federal civil right that prohibits sex discrimination in education.
2. Title IX does not apply to females only. Title IX protects any person from sex-based discrimination, regardless of their gender.
3. Title IX covers students, employees and guests of ISU.
4. Sex-based discrimination includes sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, pregnancy, sexual violence and other sexual misconduct.
5. Idaho State University will immediately take action when any sexual harassment or sexual violence is reported.
6. Idaho State University has a Title IX coordinator, deputy coordinators and investigators trained to address Title IX violations.
7. Idaho State University has an obligation to investigate any reports of sexual misconduct. We also will take steps to stop the harassment, remedy the effects of the harassment and prevent the reoccurrence.
8. Any person who brings forward a complaint or participates in an investigation is protected from retaliation to the full extent of the law.
9. ISU has trainings and workshops for students and employees on Title IX.

# Financial Information

## *Fee Waivers*

Tuition and fee waivers are processed through financial aid as a regular scholarship in the amount of your cost of attendance. Graduate students who are receiving a waiver should plan on registering for classes as quickly as possible to avoid delays to their fee waiver being applied. Your fee waiver will only be applied once you have registered for a minimum of 9 credits (to meet the full time eligibility requirement for funding).

## *Stipend Payments*

Stipend payments for graduate assistants are paid as a regular payroll check on the standard biweekly employee pay schedule. You will need to have all Human Resources paperwork filled out and submitted to get your stipend payments. Human Resources paperwork (including direct deposit instructions) can be found here:

<https://www.isu.edu/hr/employee-tools/new-employee-resources/>

Yearly payroll date schedules can be found at: <https://www.isu.edu/payroll/>

Stipend payments for fellows are disbursed as a scholarship and will be sent out as a refund check. You are encouraged to utilize the E-refund direct deposit system (found in BengalWeb) to receive your funds more quickly than you would if a check were mailed to your address on file. Note that because these funds are not sent through a payroll system with state and federal taxes withheld you may be liable for taxes on stipend income. Make sure of your situation to avoid any surprises when filing tax returns.

# Other Funding Sources and Considerations

Because of the competitive nature of funded graduate student positions, you may need other financial resources to meet your needs. Below you will find some of the other financial resources available to graduate students.

## *Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)*

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) makes high-quality, distinctive graduate programs and healthcare-related programs available to students of the West at the resident tuition rate.

As part of the Student Exchange Program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, WRGP helps place students in a wide range of graduate programs, all designed around the educational, social, and economic needs of the West.

Through WRGP, residents of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming are eligible to enroll in available programs outside of their home state at resident tuition rates. Students need not demonstrate financial need.

To be included in WRGP, programs must meet the criteria of distinctiveness (if they are not related to healthcare) and quality. Programs are nominated by their institutions, peer-reviewed by other graduate institutions in the West, and then researched and reviewed by WICHE staff for

final approval. At this time, some 250 programs from more than 45 Western institutions participate. A full list of WRGP programs is on the WRGP website.

To be considered for the WRGP tuition rate, students simply apply directly to the department of the enrolling institution and identify themselves as WICHE WRGP applicants. Contact information for each participating program is listed in the WRGP online directory. WRGP students must fulfill all the usual requirements of the department and institution concerned, and meet all admission deadlines.

The following graduate programs at Idaho State University have been approved by WRGP:

### **College of Arts and Letters**

#### **English and Philosophy**

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in English and the Teaching of English

Master of Arts (M.A.) in English

#### **History**

Master of Arts (M.A.) in Historical Resources Management

#### **Political Science**

Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in Political Science

#### **Psychology**

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Clinical Psychology

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Experimental Psychology

### **College of Education**

#### **Organizational Learning and Performance**

Master of Science (M.S.) in Human Resource Development

#### **Sport Science and Physical Education**

Master of Physical Education (MPE/AA) in Athletic Administration

#### **Teaching and Educational Studies**

Master of Science (M.S.) in Deaf Education

### **Kasiska Division of Health Sciences**

#### **Communication Sciences and Disorders**

Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.)

Master of Science (M.S.) in Speech-Language Pathology

#### **Counseling**

Master of Counseling (MCoun) in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Master of Counseling (MCoun) in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling

#### **Medical Laboratory Science**

Master of Science (M.S.) in Medical Laboratory Science

#### **Public Health**

Master of Public Health (MPH)

#### **Nutrition and Dietetics**

Masters of Science (M.S.) in Nutrition

#### **Health Informatics**

Masters of Science (M.S.) in Health Informatics

## **College of Science and Engineering**

### **Biological Sciences**

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Biology  
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Microbiology  
Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in Biology.  
Master of Science (M.S.) in Biology  
Master of Science (M.S.) in Microbiology

### **Civil and Environmental Engineering**

Master of Science (M.S.) in Environmental Science and Management

### **Department of Mathematics and Statistics**

Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in Mathematics

### **Physics, Nuclear and Electrical Engineering**

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Nuclear Science and Engineering  
Master of Science (M.S.) in Nuclear Science and Engineering  
For more information please visit the [WRGP website](#).

## *Non-Resident Tuition Waivers (NRTW)*

Non-Resident Tuition Waivers (NRTWs) do not cover the required in-state enrollment fees, but only the non-resident tuition. Unless other scholarships are awarded, the student must pay the in-state enrollment fees each semester or term.

These awards are distributed on a competitive basis by the Graduate School.

Students should apply using the Graduate School's online [Non-Resident Tuition Waiver](#). NRTW applications must be received by May 1 for the following Fall Semester consideration and by November 1st for the following Spring Semester.

NRTWs may be granted for the academic year or for one semester only. Awards are made after final grades for the current semester are recorded.

Out of State Scholar NRTWs are used to recruit top non-resident students to ISU. The number of awards available is based on available annual funding. Out of State Scholar NRTWs are highly competitive, consequently, the average GPA awarded is typically a 3.75 or higher. These awards waive the total amount of non-resident tuition.

### Minimum Criteria:

- Must be full-time (at least 9 credits each semester)
- Must be a degree-seeking graduate student
- Must have a minimum GPA of 3.00 at the time of award and for award renewal
- Must be in a program that is not oversubscribed

### NRTW Rules

- Students must reapply for Non-Resident Tuition Waivers every year
- Late applications may not be considered
- Students who are not admitted with Classified status on the deadline date may not be eligible to receive a Non-Resident Tuition Waiver

- Students who have a GPA below 3.0 on deadline date are not eligible to receive a Non-Resident Tuition Waiver
- Waivers are awarded based upon a ranking system using the current NRTW applicants' GRE/MAT/GMAT scores (if applicable) and entry GPA
- Students must be full time (Classified Admission Status) degree-seeking students in order to be considered for an NRTW
- There are a very limited number of waivers. Many qualified applicants will not receive a waiver due to the limited number of waivers available
- Time accrued while receiving a Non-Resident Tuition Waiver WILL NOT contribute toward the length of time required for Idaho Residency status
- Recipients of NRTWs will be notified as soon as possible following determination of awards.
- If awarded, the scholarship office will send official notification to all students. Acceptance forms must be completed and returned to the Scholarship Office in order for awards to be disbursed.

Programs that do not qualify for a NRTW:

- Counseling
- Speech-Language Pathology
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physician Assistant
- Physical Therapy

With respect to campus-based aid (special non-resident waivers, loans, and college work study), applications should be made the January preceding the fall/spring semester for which aid is desired.

### *ISU Scholarships and Bengal Online Scholarship System (BOSS)*

The ISU Scholarship Program offers a wide variety of scholarships that may suit your needs and qualifications. For more information and to access ISU's online scholarship application system (BOSS), see the link below.

<https://www.isu.edu/scholarships/>

### *The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*

All graduate students should keep an updated [FAFSA](#) on file regardless of whether they intend on using FAFSA graduate unsubsidized loans. The FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for several programs and scholarships, including emergency COVID response funds. You cannot predict what your FAFSA will be used for, so it is best to just have one on file.

### *Important Contact Information*

Graduate School  
gradschool@isu.edu  
208-282-2150

*Financial Aid Office*  
finaidem@isu.edu  
(208) 282-2756