**Health Sciences Integrated Program**

**Principal Research Advisor Agreement Form**

# What is the Health Sciences Integrated Program?

The Health Sciences Integrated Program, also known as HSIP, offers doctoral training to students across multiple disciplines within the health sciences. Students are in one of the following five tracks: Biostatistics; Health and Biomedical Informatics; Health Services and Outcomes Research; Healthcare Quality and Patient Safety; and Social Sciences and Health. Integration across the various disciplines included in these tracks provides our students with the flexibility of approach to conduct the rigorous interdisciplinary research needed to improve 21st century healthcare and public health.

# What are the advantages of serving as a Principal Research Advisor for HSIP students?

The primary reason for faculty member to serve as a Principal Research Advisor for an HSIP student is because they want to contribute to training the next generation of researchers. A secondary reason is that HSIP students are talented, most enter the program having already earned a master’s degree in a related field, motivated, and fun to work with.

# What are a Principal Research Advisor’s obligations?

As defined by The Graduate School, the Principal Research Adviser (also known as mentor, PI, dissertation director, adviser) must be a member of the Northwestern University Graduate Faculty. Graduate faculty status can be requested for any faculty member serving in this role by the HSIP director.

To serve as Principal Research Advisor to an HSIP student, a faculty must be able and willing to:

* Work with the student to develop a research topic, formulate ideas and structure for, and guide the progress of the prospectus (dissertation proposal) and dissertation. In some cases, although rare, there is a principal research co-adviser who also works with the student to develop a research topic, formulate ideas and structure for, and guides the progress of the prospectus and dissertation.
* Support the student secure external or internal funding (i.e. F31, R36, predoctoral fellowships) for their dissertation, when appropriate.
* Provide the student with advice designed to help them achieve their post-graduation career goals including letters of recommendation.
* Conduct the annual review of student progress and document progress within the Graduate Student Tracking System (GSTS).
* Ensure that the student has a funding plan for all quarters after initial fellowship funding (if any) is spent, in partnership with the HSIP Director and/or Associate Director. Typically, initial fellowship funding covers the first six quarters of the student’s program.

# Can faculty serve as a Principal Research Advisor without fully funding a student?

Ideally, faculty who would like to serve as a Principal Research Advisor to an HSIP student are able to hire that student as a full-time graduate research assistant (GRA) to work on a sponsored project in their lab/team when the initial fellowship funding (if any) is spent.

Students may not require funding from the Principal Research Advisor if they have been selected for a T32 institutional predoctoral fellowship (AHRQ or NIH) or are awarded other individual internal or external funding (i.e. NIH F30 or F31 predoctoral fellowship, R36 dissertation grant, AHA fellowship, or Presidential Fellowship). In these instances, it is often helpful for the Principal Research Advisor to consider funding the student after their fellowship ends, assuming that is before they plan to graduate from the program.

HSIP recognizes that it is not always possible for faculty who would like to serve as a Principal Research Advisor to an HSIP student to fully fund that student. One reason this might not be possible is that faculty cannot afford to cover the full cost of hiring the student as a GRA on one of their sponsored projects. In this circumstance, faculty are asked to talk with the HSIP Director and/or Associate Director. Sometimes it is possible to cover the full cost across multiple projects. Other times, once it is clear what percentage of the GRA appointment the faculty member can cover, the program may determine if it can cover the difference.

# How much does it cost to fund an HSIP student?

Faculty must understand that graduate students are paid differently from regular staff. Instead of salary and fringe benefits, students are paid: (1) a stipend, (2) the Principal Investigator’s (PI’s) portion of the cost of the student’s tuition, and (3) fringe benefits. Importantly, the fringe benefit rate applied to students is significantly less than that for regular staff. Indirect costs are charged on a student’s stipend and fringe benefits but are not charged on the PI’s portion of the tuition.

In the 2023-24 academic year (AY24), **the 12-month cost for a full-time GRA is $55,509**. PhD students may work no more than **20 hours per week** from all sources, including assistantships. The remainder of student’s full-time effort is to be spent on their dissertation research.

The itemized cost breaks down for AY24 is as follows:

1. Stipend. $3,208.34 per month which is $38,500.00 annually.
2. PI’s portion of the cost of student’s tuition. $4,002.00 per quarter which is $16,008.00 annually.
3. Fringe benefit rate of 2.6% of the cost of their stipend. $250.25 per quarter which is $1,001.00 annually.

# Mentorship Agreement

By signing this form, [Principal Research Advisor Name] agrees to serve as the Principal Research Advisor for [Student Name] for the remainder of doctoral training in the Health Sciences Integrated Program.

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Principal Research Advisor Signature

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Please return the signed form via email to Lucy Bilaver, Director of the Health Sciences Integrated Program, at l-bilaver@northwestern.edu