



UT Austin South Asia Institute

FLAS Fellowship - Frequently Asked Questions

Updated November 1st, 2023

I. Questions about eligibility

Who is eligible to receive a FLAS fellowship?

Undergraduate and graduate students who are US citizens or nationals or permanent residents and who are also enrolled (or accepted for enrollment) in a program that combines training in a modern language of South Asia with international or area studies (or with the international aspects of professional or other fields of study) are eligible for a FLAS Fellowship. Awards will not be made to native speakers of the language or to those who possess fluency equivalent to educated native speakers in the language for which the award is sought. Awards for beginning level language studies will not be made to undergraduate students; a graduate student can only receive a Fellowship for first year study if the student has advanced proficiency in another South Asian language and can clearly justify why the new language is necessary for their research.

Only currently enrolled or accepted UT Austin students can apply for Academic Year awards. Currently enrolled students from UT Austin and other institutions are welcome to apply for a Summer award.

Is there a limit on the number of FLAS fellowships I can receive?

There is no limit on the number of sequential FLAS awards one person may receive, but no more than one concurrent award can be accepted. As long as previous FLAS recipients continue to meet the FLAS eligibility requirements, they are welcome to reapply.

Can I receive a summer FLAS if I will graduate in the previous spring?

Possibly. Please speak with the FLAS coordinator about your situation.

Must I file a FAFSA as part of my application?

We strongly recommend both graduate and undergraduate students file a FAFSA and submit proof of completion as part of their FLAS application. This is due to new program guidelines that require SAI to consider financial need as part of a two-tiered ranking system. The selection committee first ranks FLAS applications by merit and then takes “financial need” of applicants into consideration, giving competitive preference in their final rankings to applicants who demonstrate financial need. While you are not required to file a FAFSA, students who do not file a FAFSA will be ranked lower than those who do.

How can I file a FAFSA?

Please visit the UT Office of Student Financial Services website to complete and submit a FAFSA application at <http://finaid.utexas.edu/financialaid/process/applying.html>.

When should I file my FAFSA?

You may complete/submit your FAFSA application for the next academic year starting on January 1 and are encouraged to do so as soon as possible, as there is a three week processing time for the FAFSA application. The FAFSA must be completed before the FLAS application deadline, as proof of completion of your FAFSA is due as part of your application for the FLAS. This information is important as it demonstrates your 'financial need' for the FLAS application. **Once the FAFSA application is completed, please send a printed copy of the results to the South Asia Institute office along with your UT EID.** The copy will then be included in your fellowship application file.

May I apply for a FLAS if I am not a UT Austin student?

Graduate students from another university may apply for the Summer FLAS. Undergraduate students must be enrolled and in good standing at UT Austin to apply for the Summer FLAS. For the Academic Year FLAS, students must be enrolled full-time at UT Austin during the award period.

If you are applying as a new student to a graduate program at UT Austin, you are eligible to apply for an Academic Year FLAS. Please keep in contact with the FLAS Coordinator regarding the status of your application with the UT Graduate School and the department to which you are applying to study.

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What areas and languages are NOT eligible?

SAI offers funding for the following approved modern languages: Bengali, Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu (and other approved contemporary South Asian languages such as Persian, etc.); and for the study of the region of South Asia.

The study of the following groups and territories is considered to be domestic studies and therefore ineligible for Title VI funding: communities of immigrants in the United States; American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico; any other US territory or protectorate. In addition, FLAS fellowships are to support the study of modern foreign languages. Sanskrit is not eligible.

II. Questions about the application process

Can I apply to more than one center?

Yes. You will not be allowed to receive two simultaneous awards, but you are welcome to submit applications to more than one center. Other centers that offer FLAS Fellowships at UT Austin include The Center for European Studies (CES) and the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies

(CREEES). Please contact them directly for more information on their approved languages and application process, as they may differ from SAI's policy and procedures.

Who should fill out my language evaluation form if I have never taken courses in the language I want to study?

If you have no knowledge of the language for which you want to receive a FLAS, have someone evaluate you for a foreign language you have already studied, preferably a South Asian language. If you have never taken courses but have some knowledge of the language for which you want to receive a FLAS (for example, if you lived abroad), try to find someone who can evaluate your knowledge of the language.

If you don't already know someone who is qualified to fill out your evaluation form, contact the Department of Asian Studies at UT Austin, or the appropriate department on your campus where South Asian languages are taught.

What happens after I submit my application?

Recipients, alternates, and non-recipients will receive notification of their status in mid-February, after the application deadline. Award letters will contain more information about payment processes, registration, responsibilities and requirements, etc.

Who will review/evaluate my application?

SAI has a FLAS review and selection committee that will evaluate and rank applicants. Summer and Academic Year applications are ranked separately and are not in competition with each other.

The review committee comprises scholars adept at reading across disciplines; so do not be shy about referring to specialized literatures, theories, or methods as appropriate. At the same time, do not try to impress the committee with arcane vocabulary or references. The best statements are clear and written in plain English, show seriousness and purpose, and are true to the challenges in your field of study and to your current stage of training. The evaluation committee understands that undergraduate and beginning graduate students may have rudimentary plans, while more advanced students will be able to lay out plans for major research projects in some detail. Likewise, the evaluation committee understands that essays from applicants in professional schools or other non-thesis degree programs will be quite different from essays written by students planning theses or dissertations. Therefore, respond to all questions to address your specific situation and do not try to tailor your application to fit some perceived ideal candidate.

Do I need to submit a bibliography with my essay?

Bibliographies per se are discouraged, but if you wish, you may mention important authors or works in your essays or include relevant citations parenthetically.

III. Questions about FLAS usage

(See below for specific answers about Academic Year and Summer awards)

Can a FLAS award be used to participate in an internship program?

Generally not, because an internship program is not a formal academic program of full-time study. Contact the FLAS Coordinator about a specific internship if you feel it meets the full-time study and other requirements.

Is a FLAS fellow allowed to work during the award period?

In limited situations, yes. Remember that FLAS fellows are required to be engaged in full-time foreign language and area or international studies course work during the academic year, or in intensive language study during the summer award period. However, SAI policy does allow minimal employment **with prior permission**. Contact the FLAS Coordinator for more details.

Can I receive both a FLAS and another fellowship during the same period?

In rare cases, but generally not. FLAS guidelines prohibit you from holding a FLAS Fellowship and any other Federal grant or scholarship awards. If you are accepting a FLAS and any other grant and scholarship, you must consult with the FLAS Coordinator to confirm there are no conflicts in holding both a FLAS and any other award.

Can I get a single semester award during the academic year?

No.

Can I take a semester off and finish in the subsequent period?

No.

Can I request a Pass/Fail grade for my courses?

No. FLAS courses must be taken for a letter grade, including conference courses.

Can I use my FLAS at a different U.S. institution?

Only during the summer.

Can I use the FLAS for a reading knowledge course?

No. FLAS is designed to give students proficiency in speaking and writing, as well as reading and listening.

IV. About ACADEMIC YEAR awards:

Are undergraduate students eligible for an Academic Year award?

Yes.

What does an academic year FLAS Fellow receive?

For graduate students: Award benefits include a \$20,000 nine-month stipend and the cost of in-state tuition and required fees (up to \$18,000 and a maximum of 9 credit hours in most cases).

For undergraduate students: Award benefits include a nine-month stipend of \$5,000 plus cost of in-state tuition and course-related fees up to \$10,000 per academic year (up to a maximum of 15 hours per semester).

What can I use an academic year FLAS for?

Academic Year FLAS fellowships are awarded for a full academic year to students engaged in formal full-time language and area studies coursework at UT Austin.

Do I have to take specific classes?

FLAS recipients must take at least one language course and one South Asia-focused area studies course each semester. Conference courses are acceptable but must be approved by the FLAS coordinator and require a syllabus, the instructor's CV, and a written justification from the FLAS fellow.

How many credits do I need to take?

Fellows must engage in full-time study during the tenure of the award as defined by UT Austin (for graduate students this means at least 8 graduate credits and for undergraduates this means at least 12 undergraduate credits). Awardees must take at least one course in the language of the award and one related South Asia area studies course each semester. FLAS Fellows must remain in academic good standing (satisfactory progress toward a degree, enrolled full-time, attend classes faithfully, complete course requirements on schedule). **No pass/fail courses are permitted for FLAS Fellows.**

Beyond coursework, is anything required of FLAS Fellows?

All fellows will be required to fill out pre- and post-award reports for the US Department of Education and to respond to periodic surveys in the years following their award. They are also required to take an ACTFL-certified language assessment test at the start and end of the fellowship period.

Participation in SAI programs, including joining in student professional development activities, attending the weekly seminar series and assisting with SAI's K-12 Outreach Program, are also strongly encouraged.

V. About SUMMER awards:

Are undergraduate students eligible for a summer award?

Yes. Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for summer awards.

Summer FLAS fellowships are intended to help students gain the equivalent of a year's worth of college-level language study. They support students enrolled in:

formal **domestic** programs of intensive language study at the intermediate or advanced level;

OR

formal **overseas** programs of intensive language study at the intermediate or advanced level (3rd or 5th semester, depending on the language).

To be considered "intensive," a language program must offer a 150 contact (class-time) hours and must last a minimum of 6 weeks.

What does a summer FLAS Fellow receive?

The summer fellowship for both graduate and undergraduate students provides a stipend of \$3,500 plus institutional payments (tuition and course-related fees) up to \$5,000.

Does a summer FLAS include a travel award?

No. At this time the FLAS Fellowship does not include assistance with travel expenses.

May I switch programs and/or languages after I submit my application?

Requests to change programs and/or languages are handled by the FLAS Coordinator and are rarely granted. **Before students prepare an application for a Summer FLAS, they should thoroughly research available programs for their proposed language of study.**

Do I need permission to travel overseas on a Summer FLAS?

Yes - Summer FLAS recipients studying internationally must apply to the International Office for [International Travel Authorization](#) and [Restricted Region Travel Approval](#) if applicable. Students will be registered with the International Office, with mandatory overseas insurance and coverage under International SOS, UT's overseas emergency plan. Fellows must cover fees for insurance.

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All fellows will be required to fill out pre- and post-award reports for the US Department of Education and to respond to periodic surveys in the years following their award. They are also required to take an ACTFL-certified language assessment test at the start and end of the fellowship period.

Upon returning from summer study, fellows are strongly encouraged to continue participation in SAI programs, including joining in student professional development activities, attending the weekly seminar series and assisting with SAI's K-12 Outreach Program.