

Florida State University SAIT Lab Scholarship Program Guidelines

Welcome to the FSU SFS scholarship program in Information Security and Assurance. You are a valuable asset to the future of our nation's security and we are proud that you chose a career in this critical area of public service.

The intent of both National Science Foundation Scholarship for Service (SFS) and DoD Information Assurance Scholarship Program (IASP) are to prepare scholars for success in the program here at Florida State and as professionals in positions of trust with federal agencies. We always expect students to pursue excellence and to make academic decisions that are in the best interests of the scholarship programs. Occasionally, grey decision areas arise. Below you will find insight that you may consider guidelines in some areas where questions have arisen. The information included here applies to both the IASP and SFS students.

1. **Full Time Status.** All IASP and SFS scholarship students must be full time students in accordance with the rules and policies of FSU. Additionally, SAIT Lab may augment course, hours, and workload requirements as necessary to ensure the academic quality of IASP and SFS graduates. Twelve semester hours are required for full time status, though this requirement may be waived in the final semester if circumstances necessitate. Stipends and other compensation may be commensurately adjusted when reduced course loads are authorized.
2. **Outside Coursework.** Students funded by the IASP and SFS may request to register for courses outside the Computer Science Graduate program and to use those courses to fulfill the minimum semester hour requirement to be considered full-time. Such requests will only be considered if all program requirements have been met.
3. **Assistantships.** IASP and SFS students are not authorized to accept assistantships (such as Teaching Assistantships or Research Assistantships). In exceptional cases, scholars desiring to accept assistantships should make the request in writing to the PIs in time for thoughtful consideration. Again, if an assistantship is authorized, it may be accompanied by a compensatory reduction in stipend and/or other compensation.
4. **Summer and Supplemental Stipends.** Occasionally circumstances result in student support gaps (e.g. students without summer internship or without Federal employment after graduation. In such cases, IASP and SFS students may request a Supplemental Stipend. When awarded, supplemental stipends will not exceed \$1,000 per month for up to six months and may be accompanied by residential or other work requirements. Requests for tuition payments during supplemental periods should also be justified in writing to the PIs.
5. **Taxes on Scholarship funds.** Each student is individually responsible to report all taxable income to the IRS. Tax fraud or evasion is a serious offense whose conviction can negate opportunity for federal employment. The only credible source for tax information is the internal revenue service. **DISCLAIMER: THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS FORWARDED FROM THE DOD IASP OFFICE FOR YOUR USE. Do not count on it as the final source for your tax information.**
 - a. Money used to pay for tuition, books required fees and supplies is considered "qualified scholarship" money and is generally not taxable.
 - b. Money for room, board, and living expenses is considered "non-qualified" scholarship money and is taxable.
 - c. There is no requirement for FSU to withhold tax or report these payments to the IRS or you via W-2. **THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU DO NOT RECEIVE TAXABLE INCOME FROM FSU.**
 - d. The recipient has the responsibility to determine what amount is "qualified" versus "nonqualified" and to report the "nonqualified" portion annually on tax forms and to pay any associated tax liability.
 - e. Failure to report accurate amounts could be considered as tax evasion and is a crime that can hinder your ability to obtain security clearance with a federal agency
6. **Job and internship search activity.** It is the responsibility of each NSF/SFS student to seek out a full-time summer internship and full-time employment with a federal agency to begin upon completion of the program. Documentation and follow-up on search activity must be maintained and recorded. Job search activity sheets, which have been provided by the program's OPM offices, must be submitted quarterly to Kathy Roberson at the SFS/OPM office via e-mail. It is important to actively search for internship and job opportunities well in advance due to the fact that security clearance and hiring processes take time. Each student is encouraged to have on hand compiled facts pertaining to background information to assist with this process prior to beginning your internship/job search. For example, you will need to provide information on previous addresses, employment history, academic history and character references for the last seven years.