

Profile of Successful Candidates

Graduate Student Scholarships

Alberta Scholarship Programs has developed a profile of previous award winners in order to help graduate students assess their competitiveness when applying for the following graduate scholarships:

- Sir James Lougheed Award of Distinction (Master and Doctoral Level) and,
- Arts Graduate Scholarship (Master Level)

The 215 recipients in the last six years of competitions were assessed in the following quantifiable areas:

- GPA (Grade Point Average)
- Number of research contributions
- Number of other contributions such as academic, community, professional activities, and
- Number of previous awards.

The report, however, assessed neither the quality of research contributions nor the quality of previous awards a candidate has received. The value of awards received and the determination of the quality of research contributions were considered by the selection committee. The selection committee also considered the applicant's research and/or program objectives, the applicant's goals during and after completion of studies and letters of support provided by past professors or other individuals that know the applicant well enough to provide useful information to the selection committee.

Master's Level

Successful candidates typically have a GPA in the range of 3.7 to 4.0; the average GPA was 3.9, with 70% of all recipients obtaining a GPA in the 3.90 to 4.00 range. Students with a lower GPA (sometimes due to variable grades in early semesters of a program) have compensated with a high number of publications and awards. Applicants should understand that a GPA which is not at the very highest level is not an absolute barrier to success in a competition but committee members will be looking for evidence that an applicant has found his or her vocation and is "on track" and focused.

<i>GPA</i>	<i>Recipients</i>	<i>Presentations Average</i>	<i>Publications Average</i>	<i>Awards Average</i>
3.00-3.50	7	23	5.1	7.7
3.60-3.70	8	5.5	9.5	8
3.71-3.77	6	2.9	3.8	6.9
3.80	16	6.6	2.9	10.7
3.90-3.95	36	1.7	3.6	12.5
4.00	47	4.1	10.3	12.1

All successful candidates (120 award winners) provided two references related to their academic research. Reference letters play a significant role in determining whether a student will be successful in receiving an award, particularly those students those students who possess a GPA below the mean. Useful reference letters are those where the author shows familiarity with the applicant's past academic and/or research performance and the planned research proposal. Since grading practices vary enormously across institutions and educational systems, letters that comment on the abilities of an applicant in comparison to other students at the same stage of their studies can supplement information provided by GPAs. Reference letters that can attest to the student's success in conducting the planned research may be the deciding factor in selecting an applicant for an award.

Award winners have received a number of awards throughout the course of their academic career ranging from 2 to 25, with a mean of 12. Successful award winners have published an average of 3 times (ranging from 0-21). Individuals with fewer publications have compensated through a combination of academic, community and professional contributions involving teaching, volunteer and professional work; and have received a number of awards.

Doctoral Level

Successful candidates (95 award winners) have a GPA in the range of 3.5 to 4.0 and 90% of the recipients have a GPA between 3.8 and 4.0.

<i>GPA</i>	<i>Recipients</i>	<i>Presentations Average</i>	<i>Publications Average</i>	<i>Awards Average</i>
3.50	4	4.3	9.8	14.4
3.70-3.77	5	5.8	6.4	22.6
3.80-3.87	16	4.9	6.1	15.3
3.90-3.95	19	8	6.5	14.6
4.00	51	7.5	8.0	12.7

All successful applicants provided two references related to their academic achievement and research. They have received a number of awards (ranging from 4 to 51) throughout the course of their academic career with an average of 17. Recipients had, on average, 8 publications; the range among students is between 2 to 17.

In addition, doctoral students have presented at conferences on average of 7 times; the range between students is 0-27; individuals with fewer presentations have compensated through a combination of academic, community and professional contributions involving teaching, volunteer work and professional work; and have received a number of other awards.

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