

PhD Appointment Letter Guide

Updated Fall 2025



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PhD Appointment Letter Guide

Appointment Coordinator



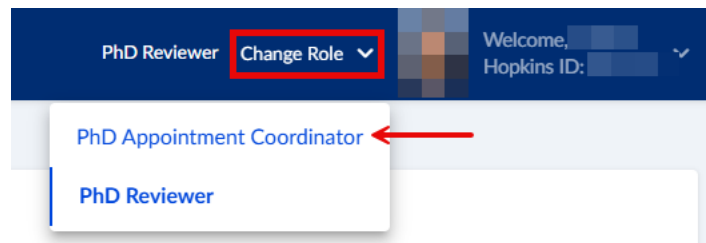
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How to make an appointment letter

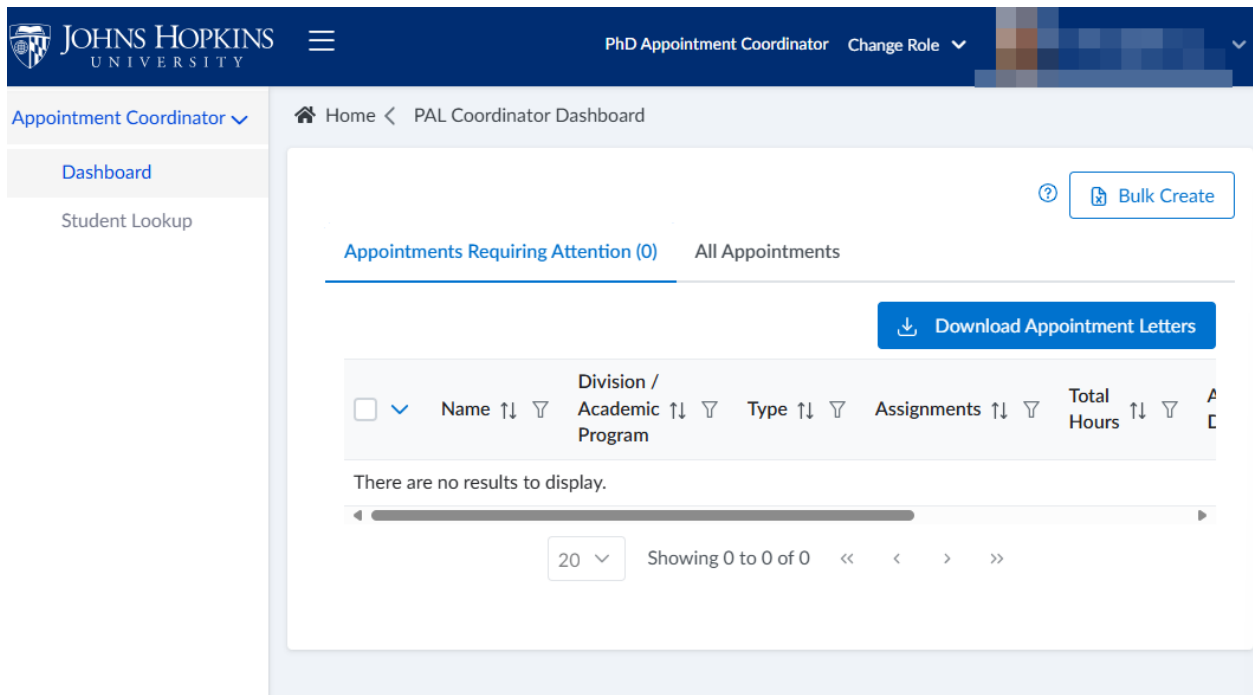
As an appointment coordinator, you'll receive information from your school or division on a PhD student's appointment for the upcoming term.

When you know the details of a letter, log into SIS Self Service and change your role to "PhD Appointment Coordinator".

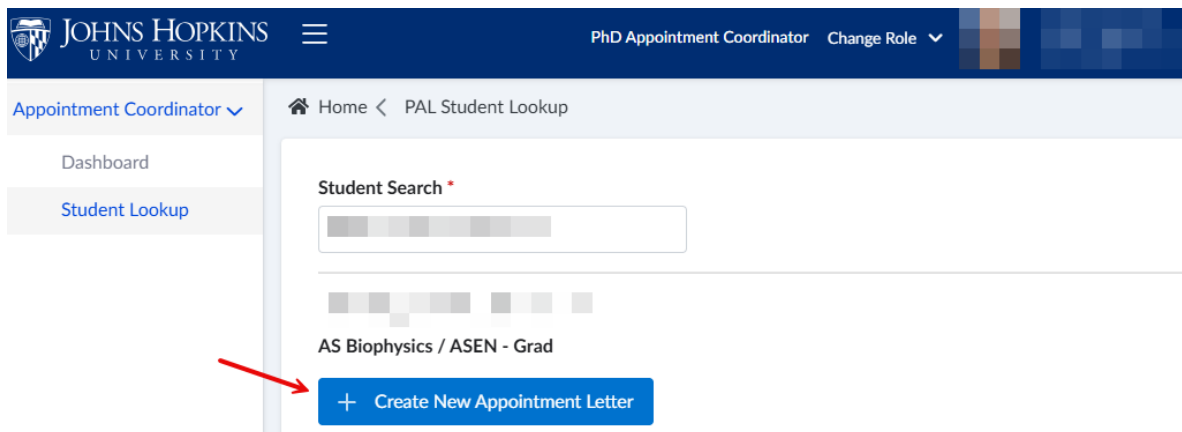
If you don't have this role listed, please email phdapptletters@jh.edu for assistance.



Your dashboard landing page will look like this.



Select "Student Lookup" on the left-hand side and search for the student you want to make a letter for.



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PhD Appointment Coordinator Change Role

Appointment Coordinator

Home < PAL Student Lookup

Dashboard

Student Lookup

Student Search *

AS Biophysics / ASEN - Grad

+ Create New Appointment Letter

When you select the "Create New Appointment Letter" button you'll be able to fill out the following information according to that student's appointment.

Appointment Type * Compensation Type * Compensation Amount *

Taxes * Payroll Contact *

Select from [the Provost Office's list of payroll contacts](#).

Assignment 1 Remove Assignment

☐ This is an academic requirement

Start Date * End Date * Unit Name *

Supervisor Name * Supervisor Email * Meetings *

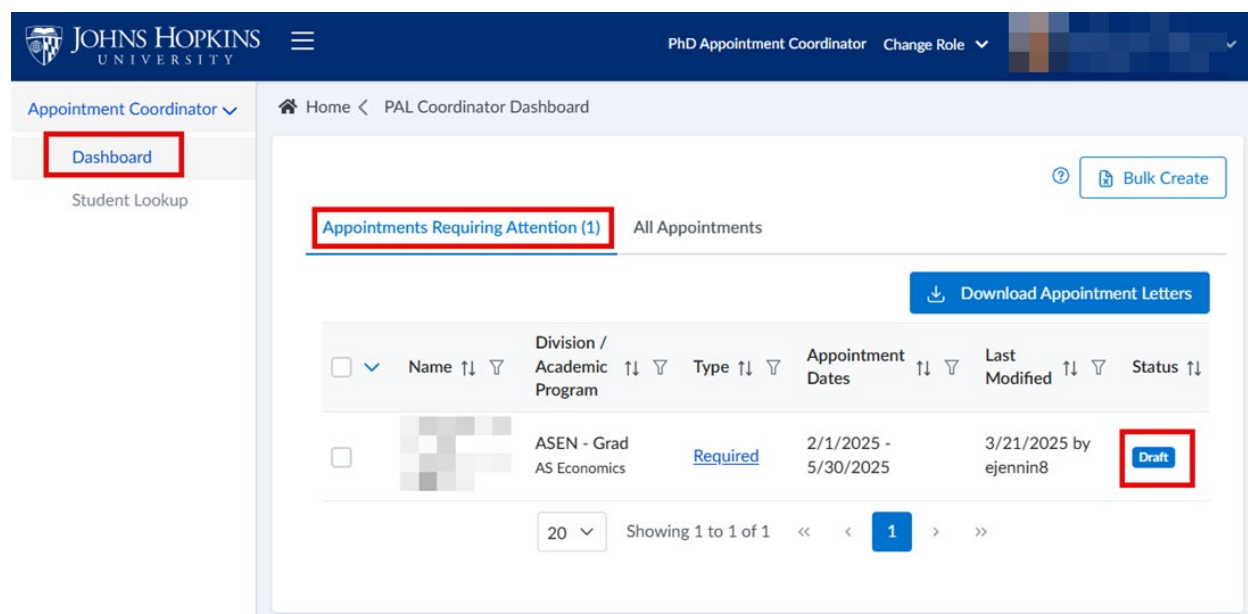
Work Location * Average Hours Per Week * Assignment Type *

Division/Department Notes

[View division/department note examples.](#)

If you need to pause the process of filling out a student's letter, you can save your progress as a draft.

Draft appointment letters can be found on your dashboard with the status "Draft".



Appointments Requiring Attention (1)

☐	Name	Division / Academic Program	Type	Appointment Dates	Last Modified	Status
☐	[Redacted]	ASEN - Grad AS Economics	Required	2/1/2025 - 5/30/2025	3/21/2025 by ejennin8	Draft

When you're ready to submit the appointment letter select the "Submit" button and choose the reviewers to send it to. The people listed are determined by the student's academic program.

If someone isn't listed who should be, please reach out to phdapptletters@jh.edu for assistance.

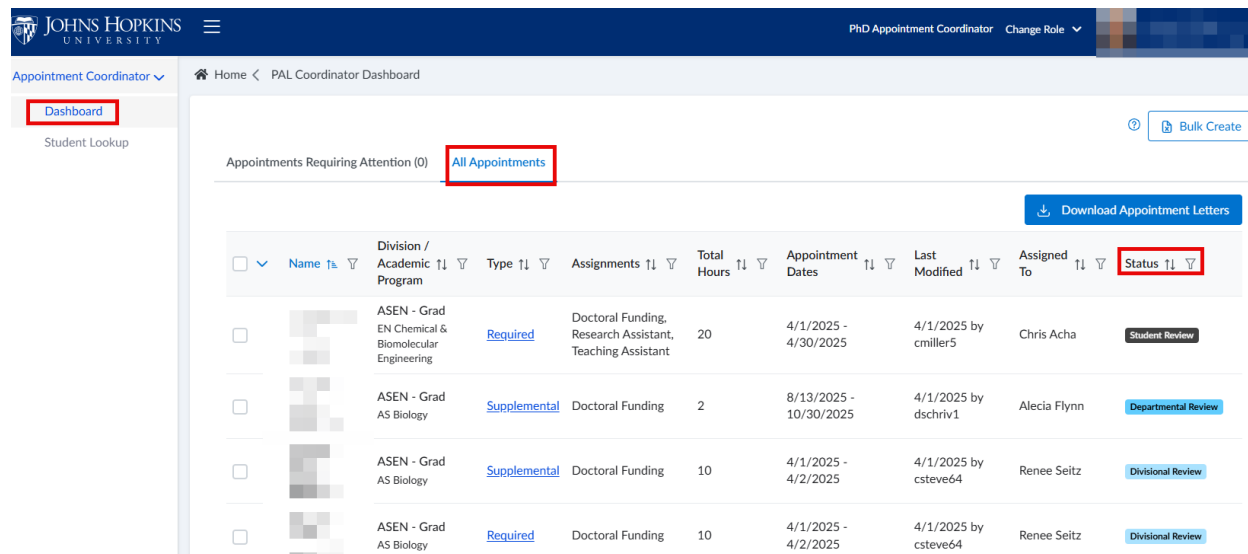
Select Reviewer

Please select a DGS/Program Director or Chair to approve this appointment.

- ☐ Select all
- ☐ Karen Fleming (kflemin2)
- ☐ Doug Barrick (dbarric1)
- ☐ Greg Bowman (gbowman3)
- ☐ Elaine Jennings (ejennin8)
- ☐ Stephanie Brehm (sbrehm1)

How do I check the status of a letter?

You can check your letters' status on the "All Appointments" tab of your dashboard. Current possible statuses include Draft, Departmental Review, Divisional Review, Modifications Requested, Student Review, Accepted, Completed, Offered and Rejected.



☐	Name	Division / Academic Program	Type	Assignments	Total Hours	Appointment Dates	Last Modified	Assigned To	Status
☐	[Blurred]	ASEN - Grad EN Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	Required	Doctoral Funding, Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant	20	4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025	4/1/2025 by cmiller5	Chris Acha	Student Review
☐	[Blurred]	ASEN - Grad AS Biology	Supplemental	Doctoral Funding	2	8/13/2025 - 10/30/2025	4/1/2025 by dschiv1	Alecia Flynn	Departmental Review
☐	[Blurred]	ASEN - Grad AS Biology	Supplemental	Doctoral Funding	10	4/1/2025 - 4/2/2025	4/1/2025 by csteve64	Renee Seitz	Divisional Review
☐	[Blurred]	ASEN - Grad AS Biology	Required	Doctoral Funding	10	4/1/2025 - 4/2/2025	4/1/2025 by csteve64	Renee Seitz	Divisional Review

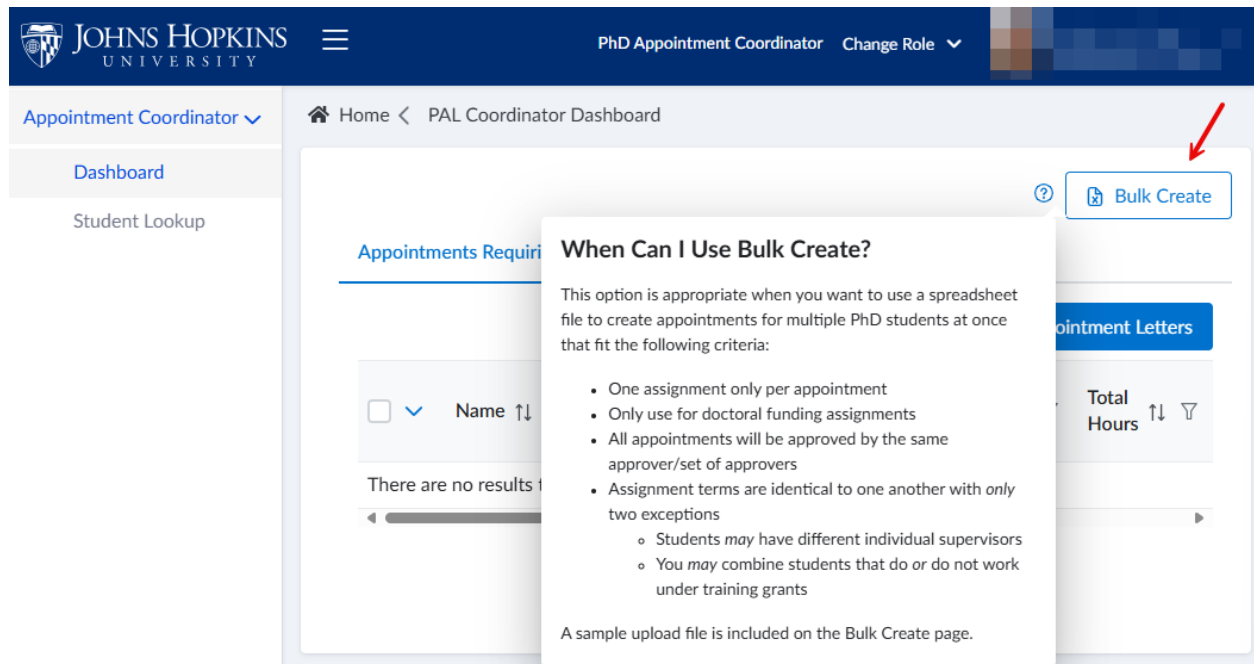
How to use Bulk Create

Requirements

On the Dashboard there's a button for "Bulk Create", and a question mark icon. The question mark icon gives you the current limitation of Bulk Create.

Bulk Create is currently only available for the following scenarios:

- Doctoral Funding
- One assignment per appointment
- All appointments will be approved by the same approvers
- Assignment terms are identical to one another with only two exceptions
- Students may have different supervisors
- You can include students who will and won't be under training grants



When Can I Use Bulk Create?

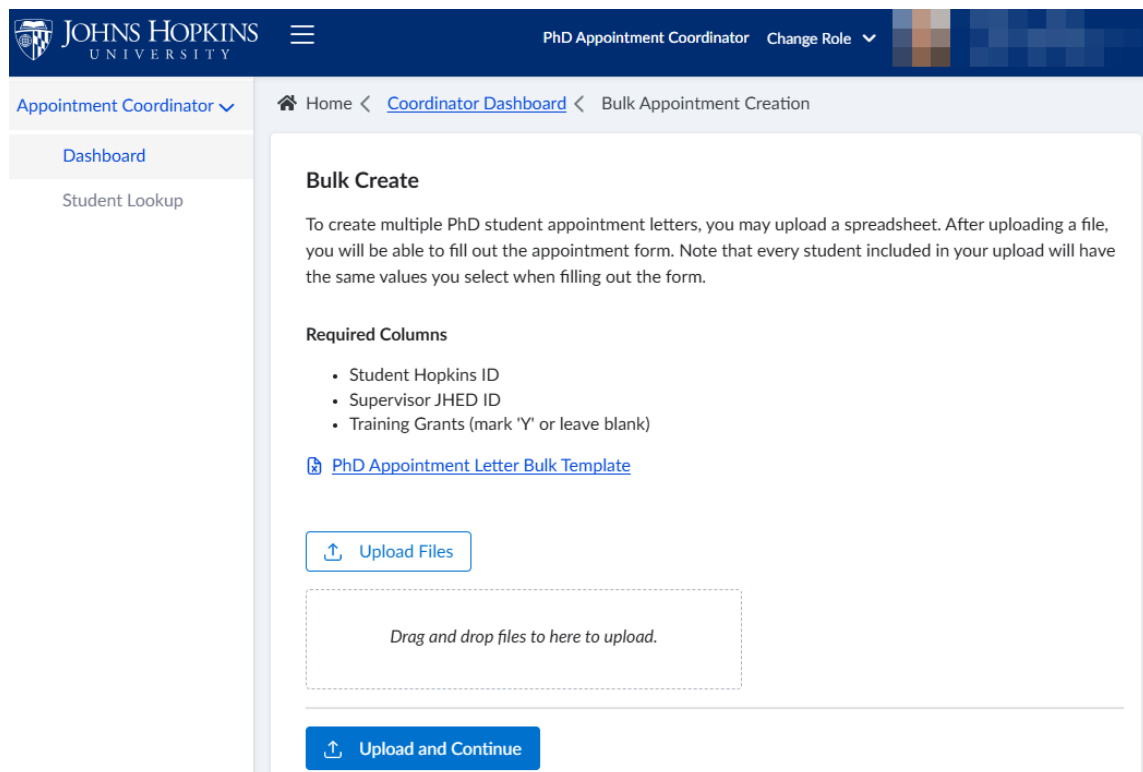
This option is appropriate when you want to use a spreadsheet file to create appointments for multiple PhD students at once that fit the following criteria:

- One assignment only per appointment
- Only use for doctoral funding assignments
- All appointments will be approved by the same approver/set of approvers
- Assignment terms are identical to one another with only two exceptions
 - Students *may* have different individual supervisors
 - You *may* combine students that do or do not work under training grants

A sample upload file is included on the Bulk Create page.

Upload Bulk Create file

Use the provided excel template to list the Students Hopkins ID, their Supervisor's JHED ID, and whether that student will be on any training grants.



Bulk Create

To create multiple PhD student appointment letters, you may upload a spreadsheet. After uploading a file, you will be able to fill out the appointment form. Note that every student included in your upload will have the same values you select when filling out the form.

Required Columns

- Student Hopkins ID
- Supervisor JHED ID
- Training Grants (mark "Y" or leave blank)

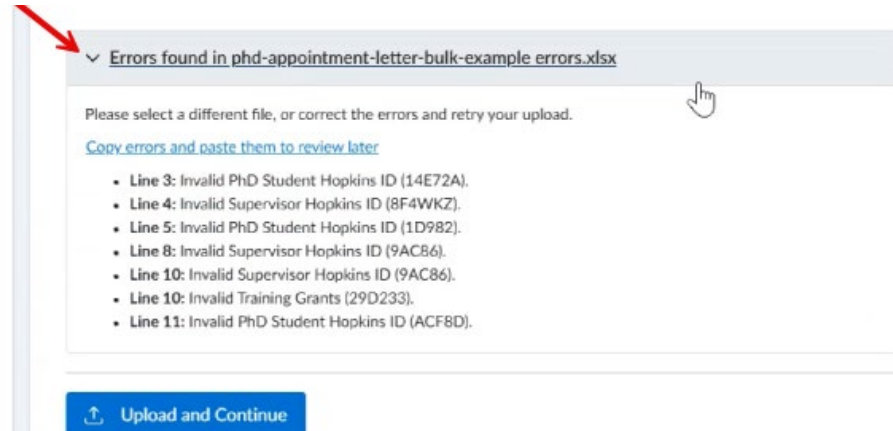
[PhD Appointment Letter Bulk Template](#)

[Upload Files](#)

Drag and drop files to here to upload.

[Upload and Continue](#)

If there are any typos in the file you upload the system will let you know where they are.



✓ **Errors found in phd-appointment-letter-bulk-example errors.xlsx**

Please select a different file, or correct the errors and retry your upload.

[Copy errors and paste them to review later](#)

- Line 3: Invalid PhD Student Hopkins ID (14E72A).
- Line 4: Invalid Supervisor Hopkins ID (8F4WKZ).
- Line 5: Invalid PhD Student Hopkins ID (1D982).
- Line 8: Invalid Supervisor Hopkins ID (9AC86).
- Line 10: Invalid Supervisor Hopkins ID (9AC86).
- Line 10: Invalid Training Grants (29D233).
- Line 11: Invalid PhD Student Hopkins ID (ACF8D).

[Upload and Continue](#)

Once you upload the file, it'll let you know how many students were included. It also grays out the Supervisor information, the Assignment Type, and Training Grant check box since those fields will be populated from the spreadsheet once you submit the PALs. Then just fill out the appointment letter like usual.

Appointment Coordinator > Home > [Coordinator Dashboard](#) > Bulk Appointment Creation

Bulk Create

38 students as imported from phd-appointment-letter-bulk-template (2).xlsx

New Bulk Appointment Draft

Appointment Type *	Compensation Type *	Compensation Amount *

Taxes *	Payroll Contact *

Select from [the Provost Office's list of payroll contacts.](#)

Assignment 1

☐ This is an academic requirement

Start Date *	End Date *	Unit Name *

Supervisor Name <i>Auto-populates on save</i>	Supervisor Email <i>Auto-populates on save</i>	Meetings *

Work Location *	Average Hours Per Week *	Assignment Type *

☐ Training Grants *Auto-populates on save*

☐ Assigned work that contributes to lab

FAQ's

When do the appointment letters need to be completed?

The students are required to receive their PAL 4 weeks prior to the start date of the appointment. For the July 1 letters, they need them by June 1. Please keep the approval process in mind when planning to start, submit, and review the letters.

What if we don't know all the details of the appointment yet?

You're able to enter "TBD" for many of the fillable boxes if you won't know the specifics in time to meet the 4-week deadline. Once you have the details confirmed you can have the person that it's currently assigned to Request Modifications.

If the student has already seen and accepted the letter, then the Appointment Coordinator can find the letter on their "All Appointments" tab and select the "edit" button. Once edits have been requested the PAL will need to go through the approval process workflow again.

Do I need to download my appointment letters?

Not unless you want to. We're currently storing all student accepted appointment letters through SIS and will be saving them long term in OnBase.

Why is Bulk Create so restrictive?

Making the bulk create work behind the scenes is complicated and takes a lot of time and testing. We're able to offer this version of bulk upload now and are excited about expanding its capabilities in the future.

Have more questions?

If you have any questions about how to use the PhD Appointment Letter (PAL) system, please reach out to phdapptletters@jh.edu for assistance.

PhD Appointment Letter Guide

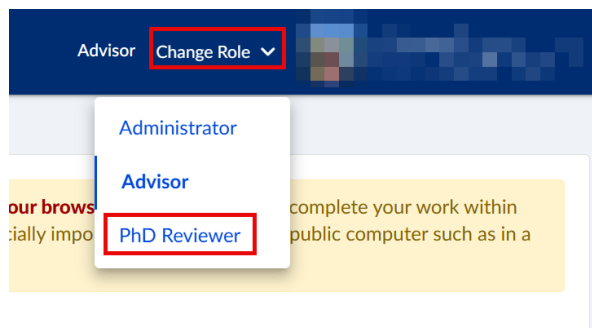
Reviewer



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How do I view my student's appointment letters?

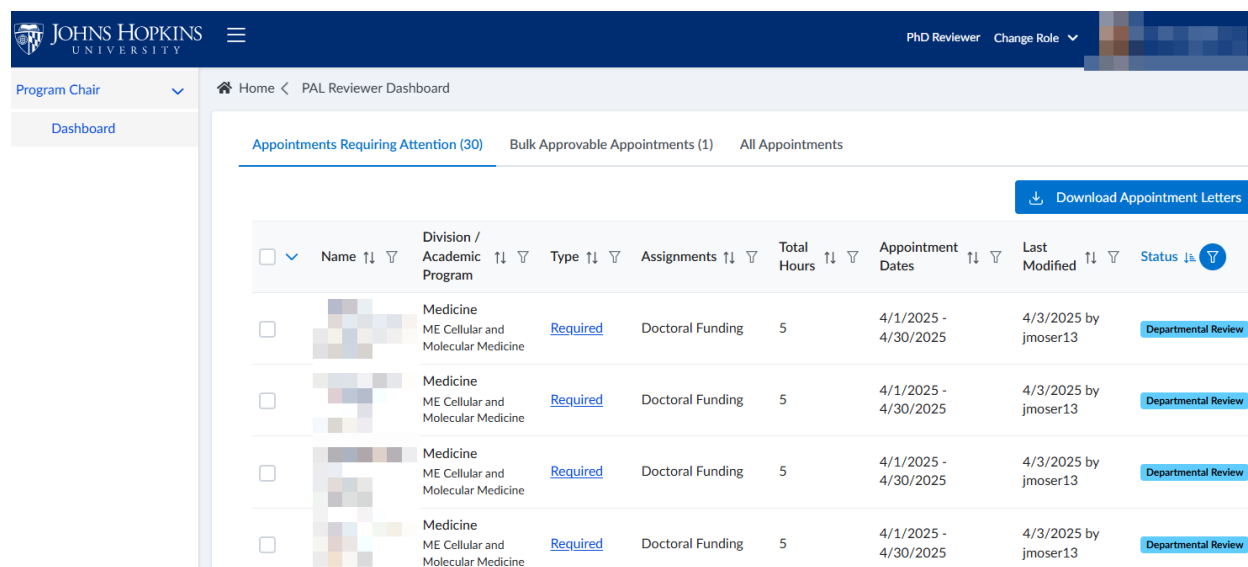
You can view appointment letters for your students by logging into SIS Self Service and changing your role to "PhD Reviewer".



Once you change your role, you'll be taken to a dashboard with appointments that are waiting for you to review and approve.

There's also an "All Appointments" tab that will have all appointments that you or your colleagues have already approved.

To open an individual letter, select the student's corresponding Assignment Type that's shown below in blue and underlined.


 A screenshot of the PAL Reviewer Dashboard. The dashboard has a dark blue header with the Johns Hopkins University logo and a 'PhD Reviewer' role indicator. Below the header, there is a navigation bar with 'Program Chair' and 'Dashboard' tabs. The main content area shows a table of appointments. The table has columns for 'Name', 'Division / Academic Program', 'Type', 'Assignments', 'Total Hours', 'Appointment Dates', 'Last Modified', and 'Status'. There are four rows of appointments, all with a 'Required' status and 'Departmental Review' button. The 'Type' column for all rows is 'Doctoral Funding'. The 'Appointment Dates' for all rows are '4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025'. The 'Last Modified' date for all rows is '4/3/2025 by jmoser13'.

	Name ↑↓	Division / Academic Program ↑↓	Type ↑↓	Assignments ↑↓	Total Hours ↑↓	Appointment Dates ↑↓	Last Modified ↑↓	Status
☐	[Blurred]	Medicine ME Cellular and Molecular Medicine	<u>Required</u>	Doctoral Funding	5	4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025	4/3/2025 by jmoser13	Departmental Review
☐	[Blurred]	Medicine ME Cellular and Molecular Medicine	<u>Required</u>	Doctoral Funding	5	4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025	4/3/2025 by jmoser13	Departmental Review
☐	[Blurred]	Medicine ME Cellular and Molecular Medicine	<u>Required</u>	Doctoral Funding	5	4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025	4/3/2025 by jmoser13	Departmental Review
☐	[Blurred]	Medicine ME Cellular and Molecular Medicine	<u>Required</u>	Doctoral Funding	5	4/1/2025 - 4/30/2025	4/3/2025 by jmoser13	Departmental Review

Once you open a letter, you can select either Approve or Request Modifications.

If modifications are requested, then the appointment is sent back to the appointment coordinator with the request details to make the corresponding edits.

Home < [Reviewer Dashboard](#) < Student Summary

Required Appointment Apr 1, 2025 - Apr 30, 2025 / 5 hours Departmental Review

Last modified Apr 3, 2025 1:38pm by jmoser13

Appointment Type Required	Compensation Type Guaranteed Funding	Compensation Amount 0	Taxes Taxes will not be withheld	Payroll Contact tbd
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Assignment 1

Start Date 04/01/2025	End Date 04/30/2025	Unit Name molecular medicine	Supervisor Name Arnold, Allyn	Supervisor Email aarnold2@jhu.edu
Meetings Other	Work Location On Campus	Average Hours Per Week 5	Assignment Type Doctoral Funding	
Training Grants No	Assigned work that contributes to lab Yes	Lab Hours 0	Division/Department Notes Doctoral guaranteed funding is contingent upon maintaining satisfactory academic progress and includes up to an average of 5 hours/week of assigned work that contributes to the functioning of the PhD student's lab/program/department in addition to the student's own academic research.	

[Approve](#)
[Request Modifications](#)
[Download Letter](#)
[Review FERPA Release Form](#)

Please enter modification request details.

[Submit Request](#)
[Cancel](#)

If the letter is approved, then you'll select the Divisional Leader(s) to send it to for final review. When the Divisional Leader approves the letter, it'll be sent to the student for acceptance.

Appointment Type
Required

Assignment 1

Start Date
04/01/2025

Meetings
Other

Training Grants
No

contributes to lab
Yes

Lab Hours
0

Select Reviewer

Please select a DGS/Program Chair to approve this appointment.

☐ Select all
☐ Peter Espenshade (pespens2)
☐ Elaine Jennings (ejennin8)
☐ Stephanie Brehm (sbrehm1)

[Submit](#)
[Cancel](#)

[Approve](#)
[Request Modifications](#)

Have any questions about the letters?

If you have any questions about the specific contents of the letter, please reach out to your department's PhD appointment coordinator for more information.

If you're having issues viewing or opening your student(s) appointment letter, please reach out to phdapptletters@jh.edu for assistance.

PhD Appointment Letter Guide

Student



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What is an Appointment Letter?

As a PhD student you'll receive an Appointment Letter that outlines your assignment for a given amount of time, typically a semester. You'll receive an email letting you know when an appointment letter is ready for you to review. The email will look like this:

Dear [REDACTED]

Please click [this link](#) to accept this appointment letter associated with your AS Biology PhD Program.

Please contact your directors of graduate studies/program directors with any questions.

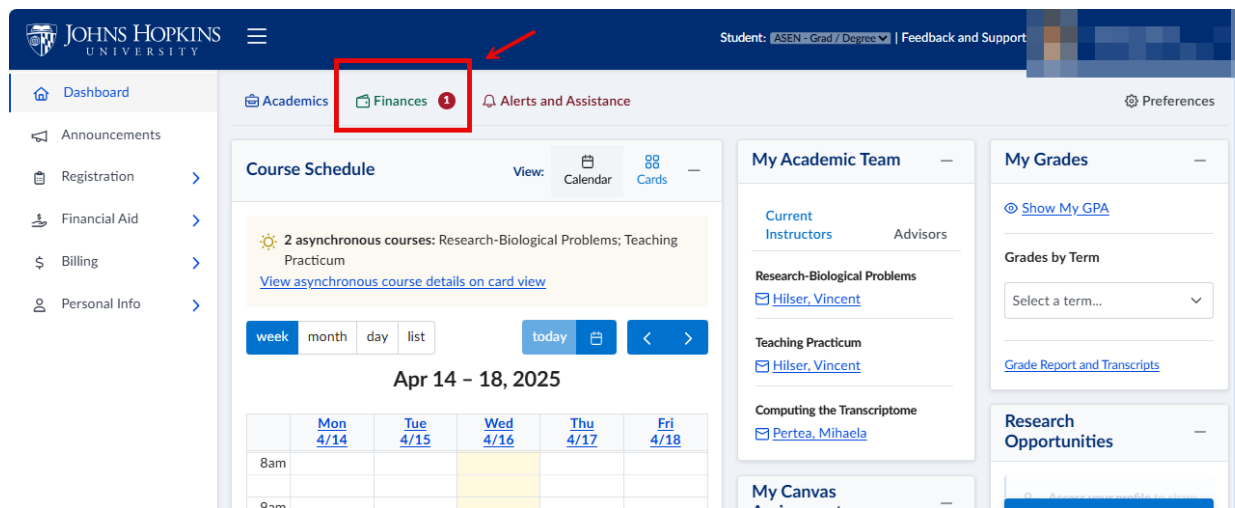
Sincerely,

PhDUnionRelations@jh.edu

How do I view my Appointment Letter?

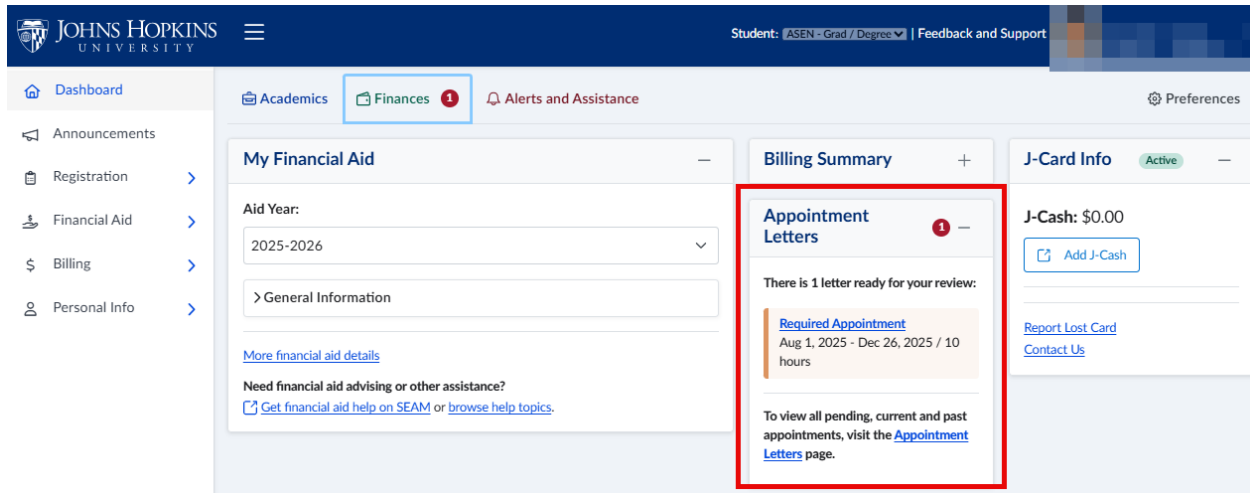
If you click the link in your notification email, you'll be taken directly to your letter.

You can also find your letter(s) through SIS Self Service. On the home page of SIS Self Service select "Finances".



The screenshot shows the SIS Self Service dashboard for a student. The top navigation bar includes the Johns Hopkins University logo, a menu icon, and the student's name and degree program. The main navigation area has tabs for Academics, Finances (highlighted with a red box and a red arrow), Alerts and Assistance, and Preferences. The left sidebar contains links for Dashboard, Announcements, Registration, Financial Aid, Billing, and Personal Info. The main content area displays the Course Schedule for April 14-18, 2025, showing 2 asynchronous courses: Research-Biological Problems; Teaching Practicum. The right sidebar contains sections for My Academic Team, My Grades, and Research Opportunities.

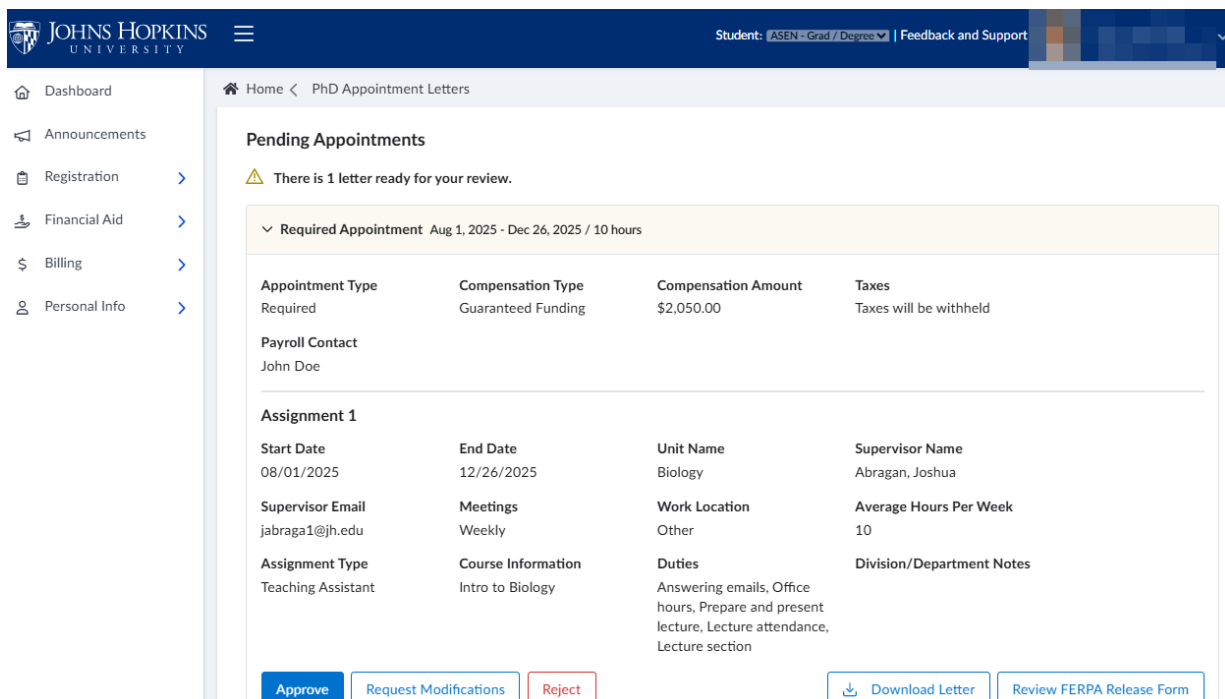
Any appointment letters you have will be shown in this box. Select the blue underlined text to open the letter. The text will either say “Required Appointment” or “Supplemental Appointment”.



The screenshot shows the 'My Financial Aid' section of the Johns Hopkins University portal. A red box highlights the 'Appointment Letters' section, which indicates there is 1 letter ready for review. The letter is titled 'Required Appointment' and covers the period from Aug 1, 2025, to Dec 26, 2025, for 10 hours. Below this, it states: 'To view all pending, current and past appointments, visit the [Appointment Letters](#) page.'

From here you’re able to review the details of your assignment and Approve, Request Modifications, or Reject the letter. You’re also able to download the letter on this page and review your current FERPA release form selections.

The downloaded letter will include additional information not shown on this page such as Payroll and Benefits, Union Information, and other addendums.



The screenshot shows the 'Pending Appointments' section of the Johns Hopkins University portal. It displays a 'Required Appointment' for the period of Aug 1, 2025, to Dec 26, 2025, for 10 hours. The details are as follows:

Appointment Type	Compensation Type	Compensation Amount	Taxes
Required	Guaranteed Funding	\$2,050.00	Taxes will be withheld

Payroll Contact
John Doe

Assignment 1

Start Date	End Date	Unit Name	Supervisor Name
08/01/2025	12/26/2025	Biology	Abrahan, Joshua

Supervisor Email	Meetings	Work Location	Average Hours Per Week
jabraga1@jh.edu	Weekly	Other	10

Assignment Type	Course Information	Duties	Division/Department Notes
Teaching Assistant	Intro to Biology	Answering emails, Office hours, Prepare and present lecture, Lecture attendance, Lecture section	

At the bottom of the page, there are buttons for 'Approve', 'Request Modifications', 'Reject', 'Download Letter', and 'Review FERPA Release Form'.

Have more questions?

If you have any questions about the specific contents of your letter, please reach out to your department for more information.

If you're having issues viewing or opening your appointment letter, please reach out to phdapptletters@jh.edu for assistance.

PhD Appointment Letter Guide

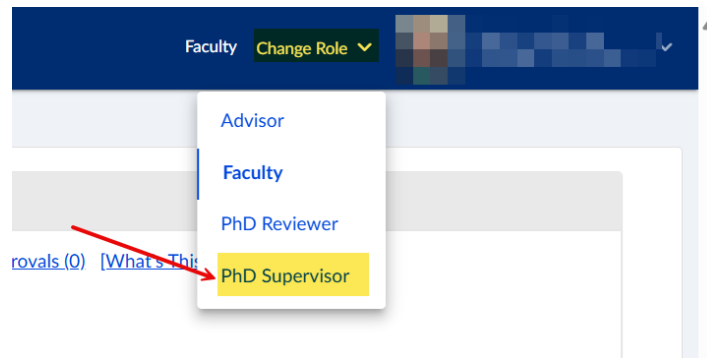
Supervisor



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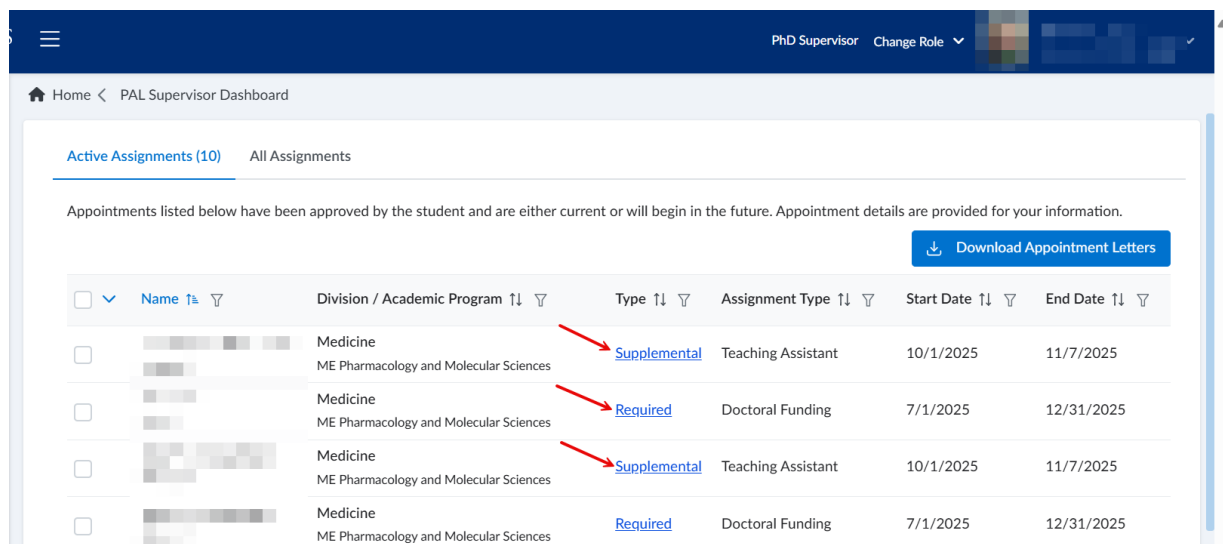
How do I view my student's appointment letters?

You can view appointment letters where you're listed as a student's supervisor by logging into SIS Self Service and changing your role to "PhD Supervisor".



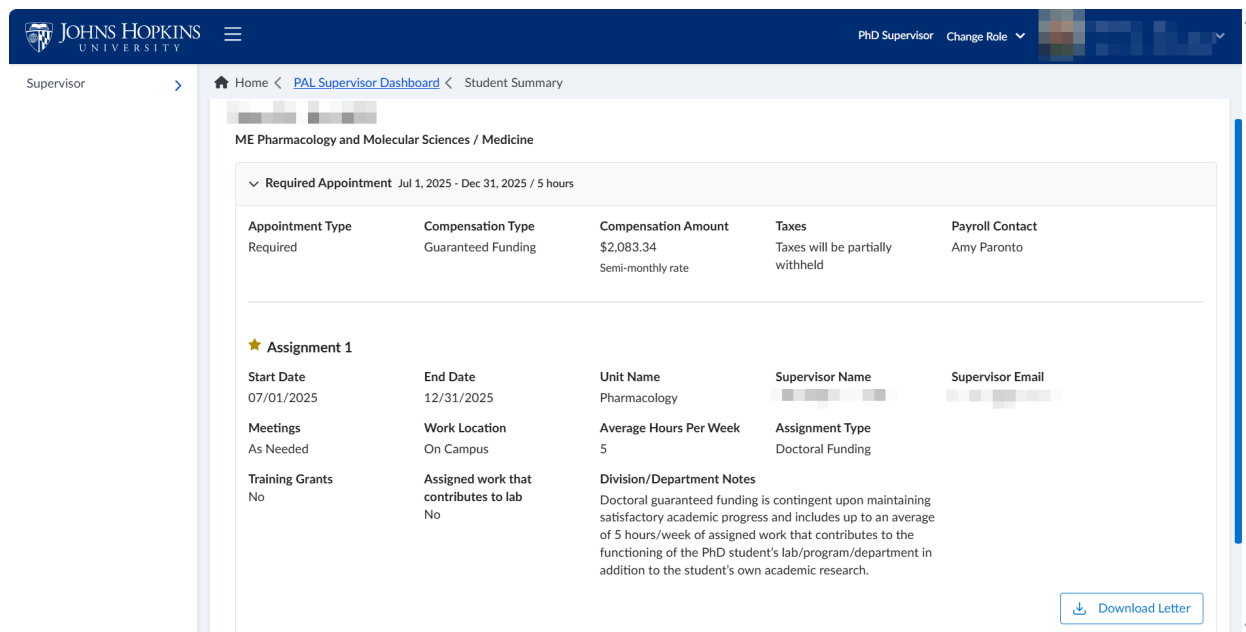
Once you change your role you'll be taken to a dashboard with your student(s) active assignments. When the end date on the appointment passes, the letter will be moved to the "All Assignments" tab.

To open an individual letter, you select the student's corresponding Assignment Type.



	Name	Division / Academic Program	Type	Assignment Type	Start Date	End Date
☐	[Redacted]	Medicine ME Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences	Supplemental	Teaching Assistant	10/1/2025	11/7/2025
☐	[Redacted]	Medicine ME Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences	Required	Doctoral Funding	7/1/2025	12/31/2025
☐	[Redacted]	Medicine ME Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences	Supplemental	Teaching Assistant	10/1/2025	11/7/2025
☐	[Redacted]	Medicine ME Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences	Required	Doctoral Funding	7/1/2025	12/31/2025

Once you open a letter, you'll be able to read more details about that assignment.



The screenshot shows the Johns Hopkins PAL Supervisor Dashboard. The user is logged in as a PhD Supervisor. The dashboard displays details for a student in the ME Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences / Medicine department. The appointment is for the period Jul 1, 2025 - Dec 31, 2025, for 5 hours. The appointment type is Required, and the compensation type is Guaranteed Funding. The compensation amount is \$2,083.34, with a semi-monthly rate. Taxes will be partially withheld. The payroll contact is Amy Paronto. The assignment is titled 'Assignment 1' and includes details such as Start Date (07/01/2025), End Date (12/31/2025), Unit Name (Pharmacology), Supervisor Name, Supervisor Email, Meetings (As Needed), Work Location (On Campus), Average Hours Per Week (5), Assignment Type (Doctoral Funding), Training Grants (No), and Assigned work that contributes to lab (No). A 'Download Letter' button is visible at the bottom right.

Appointment Type	Compensation Type	Compensation Amount	Taxes	Payroll Contact
Required	Guaranteed Funding	\$2,083.34 Semi-monthly rate	Taxes will be partially withheld	Amy Paronto

Start Date	End Date	Unit Name	Supervisor Name	Supervisor Email
07/01/2025	12/31/2025	Pharmacology		

Meetings	Work Location	Average Hours Per Week	Assignment Type
As Needed	On Campus	5	Doctoral Funding

Training Grants	Assigned work that contributes to lab	Division/Department Notes
No	No	Doctoral guaranteed funding is contingent upon maintaining satisfactory academic progress and includes up to an average of 5 hours/week of assigned work that contributes to the functioning of the PhD student's lab/program/department in addition to the student's own academic research.

[Download Letter](#)

Have more questions?

If you have any questions about the specific contents of the letter, please reach out to your department's PhD appointment coordinator for more information.

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