Policy 50.5: Tuition Remission for Graduate Students Supported by Sponsored Awards

Effective Date: July 15, 2021
Last Updated: 
Responsible Office: Office of Grants & Contracts Administration (GCA)
Contact: Post Award Management

Reason for Policy

In conjunction with 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Guidance), tuition remission and other forms of compensation may be allowable provided the individual’s participation in the research meets the criteria of 2 CFR 200

Policy Statement

Tuition remission and other forms of compensation paid as, or in lieu of, wages to students performing necessary work are allowable costs on sponsored awards provided that:

1. The individual is conducting activities necessary to the award;
2. Tuition remission and other support are provided in accordance with the established policy of the department/program and consistently provided in a like manner to students in return for similar activities conducted under sponsored awards as well as other activities; and
3. During the academic period, the student is enrolled in an advanced degree program at the university and the activities of the student in relation to the award are related to the degree program;
4. The tuition or other payments are reasonable compensation for the work performed and are conditioned explicitly upon the performance of necessary work; and
5. The program/department’s practice is to similarly compensate students under sponsored awards as well as other activities.

To be eligible for tuition remission from an award or contract, the department or program must satisfy conditions #2 and #5 above by establishing and consistently applying standard compensation packages, including stipend, tuition, and benefits, in a like manner to students engaged in comparable graduate assistantships [i.e., Teaching Assistantships (TA) and Research Assistantships (RA)] regardless of the funding source. This includes students holding assistantships paid from institutional and state funds. All components of the compensation package that are allowable, including stipend, tuition, and health insurance, must be included in the proposal budget and provided to research assistants supported on the award. Up to 100% of the standard compensation package may be charged to the award; compensation cannot exceed the standard level.

Each department/program should establish a policy governing how they handle tuition scholarships, compensation packages, and the eligibility of students for support. Any changes in standard
compensation packages must be reviewed and approved by Academic Affairs and reported to the Office of Grants and Contracts Administration for dissemination and publication on the RED website.

If stipend support in a given semester is provided from multiple sources, the tuition scholarship must be allocated to each funding source in proportion to the stipend paid and prorated by the level of effort or work on the award. Since grants and contracts begin and end at various times during the academic year, some attempt should be made to match the tuition scholarship to each salary payment as the semester or academic year progresses. If an award terminates before the end of the semester, only a proportionate share of the tuition scholarship should be charged to the award or contract.

**Procedures**

**Requesting Tuition and Other Educational Costs Paid by Sponsor**

For resident and non-resident graduate students, a tuition award is made by completing the [online Student Educational Award Form](#). Please be aware that the student is responsible for any taxable income that may result from the award. Since the electronic copy does not allow for signatures and only serves as a confirmation, it is necessary that the original printed copy, which should contain a four-digit identifier, is kept on file in the appropriate departmental office. The original printed copy must be signed by the student as well as the individual responsible for the fund.

The Financial Aid Office will verify the student’s credit hours and/or tuition aid package. After Financial Aid approval, the award will be forwarded to Student Accounts. Tuition awards will be applied directly to the student’s account; positive account balances will be refunded. **The submitter of the Student Educational Award Form must ensure that (1) the tuition aid package is consistent with the standard compensation level of the program, (2) the submitted tuition award has been fully approved and received by the student.** The status of any pending award processed electronically can be checked by logging into the [Student Educational Award Report](#).

**Exclusions/Exceptions**

N/A

**Failure to Comply**

Programs that fail to establish and maintain a policy that consistently provides compensation packages for graduate assistants will forfeit the ability to charge tuition and other forms of compensation to sponsored awards.

**Related Information**

[2 CFR 200 Uniform Guidance](#)
[UNC Charlotte Graduate School](#)