Tuition Remission for Graduate Students Supported on Sponsored Programs

Binghamton University aims to attract and retain top quality students to the University's graduate degree research programs by offering competitive recruitment packages, which includes tuition remission. The purpose of this policy is to advise Principal Investigators on charging directly to sponsored projects the tuition for Research Project Assistants (RPA) supported on a sponsored project during the academic year.

Policy

In accordance with the terms of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance, tuition remission and other forms of compensation paid as, or in lieu of, wages to students performing necessary work are allowable provided that:

- The individual is conducting activities necessary to the sponsored agreement
- Tuition remission and other support are provided in accordance with established educational institutional policy and consistently provided in a like manner to students in return for similar activities conducted in non-sponsored as well as sponsored activities
- During the academic period, the student is enrolled in an advanced degree program at the institution and the activities of the student in relation to the sponsored research project are related to the degree program
- The tuition or other payments are reasonable compensation for the work performed and are conditioned explicitly upon the performance of necessary work

In following this guidance, all proposals for external support submitted through The Research Foundation for SUNY that include salary support for an RPA, must include a request for graduate student tuition.

Inclusion of Tuition Costs

Principal Investigators who appoint a Research Project Assistant to their sponsored programs must include tuition unless the sponsor expressly prohibits it. Tuition will be included as a direct cost line item and budgeted in accordance with the rates posted at the following link: https://www.binghamton.edu/student-accounts/tuition-fees/tuition-semester/fall.html.

- Tuition will be budgeted based on the percentage of the RPAs effort commitment to the grant.
- Non-Resident Full-Time tuition will be used for any *To Be Named* RPA included in the budget.
- One credit of tuition can be requested for named RPAs in ABD status, with approval of the dean. In the event the supported RPA does not hold the status of ABD, the PI, dept, and/or dean must cover any tuition charges above the one credit, that cannot be absorbed into the awarded budget, from a non-sponsored account.
- Any request to include a tuition level outside of the University posted rates would be considered an exception and would require dean approval.
- If a sponsor does not allow tuition, a commitment from the PI, department, and/or dean to cover these costs from a non-sponsored account must accompany the proposal.
- Tuition is also required when submitting revised budgets, non-competing renewals and no cost extension requests.

Graduate Student Eligibility

Graduate students receiving tuition remission from a sponsored project must have a bi-weekly (not hourly) appointment, receive salary directly from the sponsored project in accordance with the University graduate student stipend requirements, and hold the Research Foundation payroll title of **Research Project Assistant** (RPA). An RPA must perform work for the specific sponsored award that their salary and tuition remission are being charged to.

Charging Tuition to Sponsored Programs

RPA tuition payments will be prorated, based on the student's appointment and charged to the sponsored project for the actual cost of tuition based on a full semester or a pro-rated term. Students working on more than one sponsored project in any one semester must be prorated and charged to each project in the same proportion as the student's effort on each project. Students may not be reimbursed directly for tuition charges. If the sponsored project budget does not cover the full cost of tuition, the PI, department and/or deans office will be responsible for identifying alternative non-sponsored sources.

Payment Procedure
Payment of student tuition will follow the current payment procedures issued by The Research Foundation Accounts Payable/Purchasing Office (AP/PO). A copy of the actual invoice from Student Accounts detailing each student's actual tuition costs must be included in the payment request documentation. AP/PO will review for allowability and allocability and, if appropriate, approve the payment charging the sponsored project directly for the actual costs indicated on the invoice.

Rebudgeting unspent tuition
Some sponsors require prior approval for the re-budgeting of unspent tuition. The staff in Sponsored Programs and Grants Management will assist faculty in determining whether proposed budget changes are allowable for the specific project. Please note that moving budgeted tuition funds to other cost categories will result in additional Facilities & Administrative (F&A) charges.

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