

Frequently Asked Questions

Tuition for Externally-Sponsored Graduate Assistants

Special Note: The following information applies to graduate assistantships, but not fellowships. Fellowship rules vary widely by sponsor. Please check with your SPAR administrator for information regarding tuition issues relating to externally-sponsored fellowships.

Q1. **Tuition Rate:** What tuition rate should we charge ?

A1. See the in-state graduate student tuition rates at <http://www.sc.edu/bursar/schedule.html>

Q2. **Summer Session Tuition:** Is there tuition charged for Summer Session?

A2. Beginning in Summer 2004, graduate students who have been graduate assistants in the immediately preceding Spring semester will be charged the in-state tuition appropriate for their discipline. This tuition will be charged on a per-hour basis.

Q3. **Cost-sharing of Tuition:** If the sponsor will not pay tuition, will this be shown as cost share on the sponsored project budget, and if so, how will the cost share amount be determined?

A3. No, tuition will not normally be shown as cost-share on externally-sponsored projects unless the department is providing a tuition supplement and wishes to show this as a portion of **required** cost-sharing. The department should clearly indicate this in the proposal, budget justification, and on the cost share form in USCeRA. Otherwise, it will not be accounted for as cost-sharing.

Q4. **Tuition Responsibility:** Who will pay tuition if the charge is unallowable by the Sponsor?

A4. If the tuition cannot be paid by the Sponsor, tuition can be paid by the student or department, or a combination of both.

- Q5. **State Agency-Sponsored Assistants:** Will tuition be charged to State agencies when the project is funded with State dollars?
- A5. Departments are to request tuition from all external sponsors. If a state agency cannot/will not pay the tuition, the student and/or department will be responsible for the tuition. The amount to be paid by each is to be worked out between the student and department.
- Q6. **Summer Session Tuition:** Will there be a tuition charge if the GA is taking courses in the summer? If so what will be the charge?
- A6. Question is answered above (see Q2).
- Q7. **Departmental Tuition Supplements:** Does the Department/College have the option of not charging tuition to a grant/contract? If so, who will pick up that charge? If they cost share the tuition, how will it be captured?
- A7. Departments should request tuition from all external sponsors. If Sponsor does not pay tuition, tuition must be paid by student unless department provides a tuition supplement. Payment of a tuition supplement will not be recorded as cost share.
- Q8. **Tuition Rates:** Will there be a set tuition for all graduate students?
- A8. Question is answered above (see Q1).
- Q9. **GA Contract Term:** Will there be a minimum amount of time for a GA contract (i.e. those contracts we get for only a GA)?
- A9. Graduate assistant appointments, in order to qualify for the in-state tuition rate, must begin no later than 30 days (10 days for summer sessions) after registration. Appointments which begin after this date will be subject to normal tuition policy, with no break for out-of-state students. Appointments should be made on a semester basis.
- Q10. **Graduate Assistant Policy:** Will there be a written policy posted to where we can direct questions from PIs and department administrative staff?
- A10. The policy for tuition for all graduate assistants including those on externally-sponsored projects is located on the USC webpage at the following link: <http://www.sc.edu/policies/acaf400.html> .

Q11. **Summer Session Tuition:** If students are on a GA in the Spring do they have to pay for tuition on a GA in the Summer?

A11. Yes, however, the student qualifies for in-state tuition in the summer sessions if he/she held a graduate assistantship in the immediately preceding Spring semester.

Q12. **Rebudgeting of Tuition Funds:** Is there to be rebudgeting for funds that were budgeted in tuition for the past Fall and Spring Semesters?

A12. After all relevant tuition is collected, any residual tuition funds may be rebudgeted if allowed by the Sponsor. Indirect costs will be adjusted.

Q13. **FY2002-2003 Tuition Charges:** What happens to the funds that were budgeted in the tuition line item in the past Fall and Spring Semesters?

A13. No sponsored project accounts were charged tuition in the Fall 2002 semester because procedures were not in place in time to do so. Tuition was charged in Spring 2003 to all sponsored project accounts which had GA's and which had funds budgeted for tuition.

Q14. **Tuition on Non-Competing Continuation Projects:** Does tuition for GA's have to be budgeted in a continuation of an existing project?

A14. Yes, if at all possible. It should be noted that, as of Fall 2004, GA's will be assessed in-state tuition. If the sponsored project does not pay the tuition and the student's department does not provide a tuition supplement, the student will be paying the full in-state tuition rather than the old reduced tuition amount.

Q15. **Non-Standard Assistantship Terms:** How is the tuition handled if a project starts in the middle of a semester? Budgeting in a proposal and when awarded.

A15. Because there are several potential treatments which vary by sponsor, please check with your SAM administrator for these situations.

Q16. **Rebudgeting of Tuition:** If tuition is not used for some reason, can it be rebudgeted and if it is rebudgeted, do we claim a portion of it for indirect costs?

A16. Yes, if tuition is not used because a student was not hired, then tuition may be rebudgeted if allowed by Sponsor policy. Indirect costs will be adjusted.

Q17. **Summer Session Tuition:** How is summer tuition handled?

A17. Question is answered above (see Q2).

Q18. **Tuition on Capped Cost Projects:** If a student applies for a fellowship in which the total is capped, such as a NERRS fellowship, capped at \$17,500, the department must provide the tuition, yes?

A18. No, but the student would be responsible for the entire in-state tuition amount unless the department provides a tuition supplement.

Q19. **Tuition on Non-Competing Continuation Projects:** Will multi-year grants funded before the tuition ruling be required to rebudget to cover tuition next year and thereafter?

A19. The USC Budget Office has provided an allocation of funds in FY03-04 to each college based on the average number of assistantships for the past 3 years. This allocation includes funds for assistantships funded by "A" funds and "non-A" funds which include those funded by external sponsors. The allocation for "A" funded assistantships is permanent. The allocation for "non-A" funds is a one-time allocation in FY03-04. This one-time allocation will cover during FY03-04 those continuing grants which did not originally include tuition. For years after FY03-04, the student and/or department will be responsible for tuition in the case of a continuing, non-competitive grant which did not originally include tuition for the graduate assistants hired under the grant. PI's may rebudget, if Sponsor allows, funds into the tuition category.

Q20. **Tuition on Non-Competing Continuation Projects:** Does tuition have to be charged to continuation grants where a predetermined budget has already been approved?

A20. Question answered above (see Q19).