



## TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

### Operating Policy and Procedure

#### **OP 62.40: Graduate Tuition and Fee Waivers**

**DATE:** May 9, 2016

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to set forth the institutional policy for graduate tuition and fee waivers.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in April of even-numbered years by the managing directors of Accounting Services and Student Business Services (SBS) with substantive revisions forwarded to the senior associate vice president for research and the chief financial officer and vice president for administration & finance.

#### **POLICY/PROCEDURE**

##### **1. Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Texas Tech University (TTU) to apply graduate tuition and fee waivers and exemptions (herein collectively referred to as exemptions) in accordance with federal regulations, state law, and institutional policy. In the event there are federal or state law changes or there is a discrepancy between this OP and federal or state laws, any laws that are more restrictive than this OP will prevail.

##### **2. Regulations**

- [Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, J. 45.a.](#)
- [Internal Revenue Code §§117\(d\) and 127](#)
- [Texas Education Code, §54.212](#)

##### **3. Definitions**

- a. Teaching Assistant (TA)—A graduate student employed in support of the teaching mission who is responsible for, or in charge of, a class or class section or a quiz, drill, or laboratory section. The position of teaching assistant is intended for graduate students employed in teaching activities. The source of funds is ordinarily an academic account.
- b. Research Assistant (RA)—A graduate student employed in support of the research mission of the department to perform laboratory, library, field, computer, or other such activities as may assist the department's research effort. The position of research assistant is intended for graduate students employed to perform research activities. The source of funds is ordinarily a grant, contract, or fellowship account.

- c. Graduate PT Instructor (GPTI)—A graduate student in an institution of higher education employed in support of the teaching mission of the unit who serves as the instructor of record. The graduate student must have at least 18 graduate hours in the teaching field.

#### 4. Eligibility

Students must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the graduate tuition and fee exemption.

- a. Appointed at least one-half time (0.5 FTE – 20 hours per week) to a position related to their degree program with a job begin date on or before the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (fall/spring) and the 4<sup>th</sup> class day (summer), or according to payroll guidelines, and with an electronic *Personnel Action Form* (ePAF) completion date on or before the 20<sup>th</sup> class day (fall/spring) and the 15<sup>th</sup> class day (summer).
- Note: For summer terms, the student must be both enrolled and employed during the benefit term.
    - Example 1: A student who enrolls in a full summer course that is billed as part of summer I term must have qualifying employment on or before the summer I payroll guideline date.
    - Example 2: A student who enrolls in summer II must have qualifying employment on or before the summer II payroll guideline date.
  - ePAF completion dates for summer terms must still follow the class day requirements regardless of payroll job begin dates.
- b. Appointed to a teaching assistant, research assistant, or graduate part-time instructor position and, therefore, enrolled full-time for each term as prescribed by operating policies 64.03, 64.04, and 70.27.
- c. Enrolled as of the 12<sup>th</sup> class day for the fall and spring semesters and as of the 4<sup>th</sup> class day for each summer term.

#### 5. Exemptions

Graduate students meeting the eligibility requirements above (herein referred to as qualifying graduate students) are exempted from tuition and fees for the fall, spring, and summer terms as set forth below. In accordance with federal costing principles, all eligible graduate students are exempted regardless of funding source.

- a. All Qualifying Graduate Students

Non-resident tuition rates will be waived for all qualifying graduate students without expense. Students will receive a waiver of non-resident tuition in accordance with Texas Education Code, §54.212. Additionally, the following tuition and fees will be exempted:

- Designated Tuition
- IT Fee
- Library Fee
- Student Services Fee
- Student Union Fee

- ADIA Fees (excluding special instruction, field trip or off-campus travel fees)
- Medical Services Fee (can elect to pay)
- Athletics Fee (can elect to pay)
- Recreation Center Fee (can elect to pay)

Tuition waivers and exemptions are posted once the student's ePAF is approved through level 75. Charges will be expensed to department FOPs within two weeks of the 20<sup>th</sup> class day (fall/spring) and 15<sup>th</sup> class day (summer) and are excluded from gross income in accordance with IRC §117(d).

b. Doctoral Students

A scholarship covering state and graduate tuition for three semester credit hours and the International Education Fee will be provided to all qualifying graduate students who are admitted to a doctoral program. Scholarships will be provided for the fall and spring semesters from central university funds and are excluded from gross income in accordance with IRC §117(a). The Scholarship Office will post the award based on student eligibility reports and will fee to the student's account according to regular scholarship guidelines.

In addition to the exempted fees in section 5.a above, these students will also be exempted from the following:

- Advising and Retention Fee
- Cultural Activities Fee
- Energy Fee
- ID Card Fee
- Records Fee
- RCBA Facility Fee
- RCBA and ENGR Placement Fees
- Transportation Fee

The additional exemptions are qualified tuition reductions and excluded from gross income in accordance with IRC §117(d).

c. Whitacre College of Engineering Doctoral Students

Tuition and fees not covered by the exemptions above are paid on behalf of qualifying graduate students who are admitted to a Whitacre College of Engineering (WCOE) doctoral program and who are enrolled full-time. Full-time enrollment is defined as nine hours in each full term and six hours over the two summer terms. Tuition and fees paid include:

- State and graduate tuition up to an additional six semester credit hours for each fall and spring term;
- State and graduate tuition up to six semester credit hours over the course of the summer terms; and
- The International Education Fee for each summer term enrolled.

*Education assistance payments made on behalf of qualifying graduate students may be excluded from gross income up to an annual amount not to exceed the amount defined by the Internal Revenue Service as excludable under an IRC §127 qualified plan. The current annual amount is \$5,250.*

WCOE will submit documentation to Student Business Services (SBS) to expense the benefit. Sponsored and non-sponsored funds are charged in proportion to the student's appointment. The benefit is posted to the student's account by SBS. Accounting Services will review the charge for accurate allocation and post the expense to Banner.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### a. Departments/Principal Investigators

Departments/Pis are responsible for ensuring students are appointed to the appropriate positions before the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (fall/spring) or 4<sup>th</sup> class day (summer). When students are appointed to sponsored projects, departments/Pis should make reasonable efforts to ensure the appointments are commensurate with planned effort. Submittal of the PAFs constitutes departmental/PI approval that the student's appointment is related to their degree program and, when appointed to sponsored funds, is in proportion to the expected effort.

Departments are also responsible for reviewing the financial ledgers on a monthly basis to ensure charges are appropriate and accurate. Departments must also evaluate labor redistributions involving sponsored projects to determine whether the tuition and fee expense should be adjusted proportionately.

### b. Student Business Services

SBS will establish the date parameters within the automated processing system, address departmental questions concerning the application of exemptions, coordinate the fall/spring scholarship payments, and process WCOE educational assistance payments on the student accounts.

### c. Accounting Services

As new sponsored project funds are established in Banner, Accounting Services will flag those that do not allow tuition remission. Tuition and fees for students appointed to these projects will be charged to a clearing FOP. Accounting Services is responsible for working with the departments to transfer the charges to non-sponsored funds.

## 7. Cost Transfers

If the department prefers to cover the tuition and fee expense from sources other than those which fund the students' salary, cost transfers may be submitted as long as the expense is not transferred to a sponsored project, the expense is otherwise allowable on the FOP to be charged, and the cost transfer is submitted within 90 days of the original charge. Please refer to operating policies 62.27 and 65.04 for additional policy and procedure governing the transfer of costs.

**8. Revocation**

If ePAFs are not revised or terminated as necessary before exemptions are charged out, departments must request revocation of the benefit. Requests should be addressed to the managing director of SBS and approved by the department chair, college dean, and dean of the Graduate School.