

Title/Subject: **TUITION WAIVER BENEFIT FOR GRANT-FUNDED GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS**

Applies to: faculty staff students student employees visitors contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: July 1, 2014

Contact for More Information: Faculty Personnel Services

Board Policy Administrative Policy Procedure Guideline

BACKGROUND:

Central Michigan University seeks to promote graduate education by encouraging faculty members to include support for graduate students in proposals written to secure external grants or contracts. Doing so increases the opportunity to support graduate students that can be funded and employed as Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) at CMU and enhance their educational experience. GRAs supported on grants typically receive:

- 9 or 12-month research appointment with stipend;
- Tuition waiver benefits;
- Access to grant funds to pay for consumables and supplies, equipment and required travel;
- The opportunity to work on cutting-edge high-profile projects and the cachet of support from agencies such as NSF or NIH.

Master's degree programs generally require 30 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree and typically require two calendar years (24 months) to complete.

CMU Ph.D. programs require a minimum of 60 credits beyond a bachelor's degree (30 beyond a master's) and typically require 3-6 years to complete depending on factors such as the background of the student (e.g., whether they have completed a master's degree or not) and the progress of the original research, which is difficult to predict.

PURPOSE:

To ensure that:

- Graduate students receive financial support for research assistantships funded by external grants and contracts and receive sufficient tuition credits to allow them to complete their program of study;
- Proposals submitted to external agencies are competitive by eliminating unnecessary costs, including tuition waivers beyond those required in the program of study.

DEFINITIONS:

GRA = graduate research assistant. Full-time GRAs are employed 20 hours/week to conduct research on a grant-funded project under the supervision of a CMU faculty member. In most cases the research funded by the project will form part or all of the student's master's thesis or doctoral dissertation.

Authority: President George Ross

History: None

Indexed as: Graduate Research Assistants-Tuition Waiver; Tuition Waiver-Graduate Research Assistants; Grant Funded Graduate Research Assistants

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POLICY:

Grant proposals that include funding for a GRA shall include funding for both a stipend and tuition waiver. Tuition waiver eligibility will be determined based on whether the GRA is a master's or doctorate level student and type of graduate degree pursued. Tuition is paid at the on-campus rate only.

Master's degree programs:

Generally require 30 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree and typically require two calendar years (24 months) to complete.

Full-time masters level GRAs are eligible for 12 tuition credits during an academic year and an additional 6 tuition credits for full-time employment during the summer sessions.

Ph.D. programs:

Full-time doctoral level GRAs in the SAM or EES Ph.D. programs will receive the same tuition benefit as a master's student, e.g. 12 tuition credits during an academic year and an additional 6 tuition credits for full-time employment during the summer sessions.

All other full-time doctoral level GRAs are eligible for 18 tuition credits during an academic year and an additional 6 tuition credits for full-time employment during the summer sessions.

Proposals that request support for fractions of a year (e.g., 1 semester or 6 months) or for less than full-time employment, should include funding for a prorated stipend amount and tuition waiver credits.

PROCEDURE:

This policy will be implemented by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP), College of Graduate Studies and Faculty Personnel Services. ORSP will work with members of faculty and the Colleges to ensure proposals submitted to external agencies contain both the appropriate graduate student stipend and sufficient funding to cover the required tuition as well as the other expenses required to complete the research project. The hiring department will be responsible for identifying the GRA as grant funded and indicate the tuition waiver eligibility for the period of employment. This information must be included on hire/re-hire transaction form and submitted to Faculty Personnel Services for processing.

Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to, modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines relative to this subject.