



Tuition Benefit Program Guidelines Content:

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Note to students: In order to qualify for tuition benefit, your academic department must be a participant in the tuition benefit program, and the department must have tuition benefit funding available to support your participation. Please check with your academic department if you are unsure about their participation and to confirm funding capacity. The David Eccles School of Business and the School of Dentistry currently do not participate in the Tuition Benefit Program.

CATEGORIES OF SUPPORTED GRADUATE STUDENTS

The eligible classifications qualifying a student for tuition benefit participation are:

- **Graduate Research Assistant (RA), (job code 9314, Exempt):** A graduate student assigned directly to an externally funded research grant (**5000 fund only**) and doing research for that project.
- **Graduate Assistant – Research Focus (GR), (job code 9330, Exempt)** A graduate student doing research or research-related work, who is not paid from a 5000 fund, as well as students doing field work and clinical work. **If a student wishes to work as a GR outside his/her home department, prior approval must be granted by the Dean of The Graduate School.**
- **Graduate Teaching Assistant (TA), (job code 9416, Exempt):** A graduate student with instructional responsibilities as instructor of record, assistant to the instructor of record or tutor. Duties may include lecturing, holding discussion or problem sessions, conducting laboratory sections, conducting studio or performance work, online instruction, grading, tutoring, and holding office hours. International students must be cleared through the [International Teaching Assistant Program](#) before being placed in jobs coded 9416.
- **Graduate Assistant – Teaching Focus (GT), (job code 9417, Exempt):** This category is appropriate only for incoming international students with **no student contact** (i.e. graders), and is limited to one semester, after which the student must be participating in the International Teaching Assistant Program so they can be in the TA category.
- **Graduate Fellow (GF):** A graduate student on a fellowship, whose tuition is not paid by the award. Tuition benefit has right of first reversal if other sources of tuition funding are available, meaning if tuition money is included in the fellowship award, the student



should not use tuition benefit. Fellowship payments may be distributed as a scholarship through the University's Scholarship Administration System, or in special cases as a monthly traineeship disbursement. Fellowship payments made through the Scholarship Administration must be paid from item types set up as fellowships in order to count toward the student's tuition benefit-eligible income (with budget category code 66900). No employer-employee relationship exists in a fellowship. The University administers the award and a service expectation may or may not accompany it.

These job codes/types satisfy current federal policies and regulations for graduate students working toward post-baccalaureate degrees at the University of Utah. Graduate students should be classified as exempt whenever feasible and not hourly. Students on stipends should receive prorated monthly payments. Nonmatriculated students, part-time students, and students on probationary status are ineligible for tuition benefit.

PeopleSoft fund codes 1000, 2000, 5000 and 6000 satisfy tuition payroll eligibility. Note: Graduate RAs (9314) must be paid from research grants with a 5000 fund and eight-digit project number. To be eligible for participation, no job code other than 9314 (RA) can be used on an e-PAF with a 5000 fund.

*Please note that students who participate in the subsidized health plan must have a benefit allotment available in the fund that they are paid from that can cover the 80% of the premium for the health plan (unless they are a TA paid from a 1001 fund). If there is no benefit funding available in the fund that the student is paid from, please contact the Graduate School for further guidance.

**In accordance with federal payroll tax law, job assignments must be related to the student's educational or professional objectives. Job assignments unrelated to the student's degree program, such as administrative work, are generally not allowed in conjunction with tuition benefit. In addition, a TA/GT stipend may not be decreased mid-semester based upon the final student enrollment in the assigned teaching course. Contact the Graduate School with any questions.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Students participating in the tuition benefit program (including extended tuition benefit) must be:

- full-time, matriculated graduate students in good academic standing
- maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (Law School, 2.0). Students on academic probation are not eligible for a Graduate School tuition benefit.
- Full-time student status means registration for at least 9 credit hours throughout the semester (fall and spring). This provision does not affect full-time student status definitions or requirements used elsewhere for the purpose of loan repayment, student insurance, or other reporting requirements.
- FTE cannot exceed .74. An FTE of .5 is the recommended maximum.

CREDIT HOURS COVERED PER SEMESTER:

A student enrolled in tuition benefit for both fall and spring semesters has 24 total credit hours of tuition benefit available over the academic year. The 24 hours may be split over fall, spring and summer semesters. For example, a student could potentially take 9 credit hours in Fall semester, and 9 credit hours in Spring semester, leaving 6 credits available for summer semester.

Tuition benefit will cover a maximum of 12 graduate credits in each the fall and spring semesters (minimum enrollment of 9 credits required), provided the student has eligibility and is supported by their department. Tuition benefit will cover a maximum of 6 graduate credits during the summer semester (minimum enrollment of 3 credits required), provided the student meets the eligibility for summer tuition benefit, as defined below.

Should a student be supported on tuition benefit for only the fall semester (or only the spring semester), their maximum academic year tuition benefit coverage is 12 credits shared between that one single fall/spring semester and the summer semester.

Summer does not count towards a student's total terms of eligibility; however, for a student to use tuition benefit during the summer semesters, the following conditions must be met:

- Summer cannot be the student's first semester of the academic year on tuition benefit; if this is true, the student is only eligible for extended tuition benefit (XTBP);
- Students must be supported by their department during the summer semester, and the student must meet the minimum assistantship wages and/or fellowship support to maintain their benefit;
- Students must enroll in a minimum of three credits during the summer semester, even if their tuition benefit eligibility is less;

TUITION BENEFIT DOES NOT COVER:

- Differential tuition;
- Fees outside of mandatory fees (specialized program fees, lab fees, course fees, e-book/materials fees, etc);
- Undergraduate courses;
- Repeated courses outside of courses required for degree to be repeated (namely thesis/dissertation credits);
- Enrolled credits more than then maximum coverage of 12 graduate credits;
- Non-credit/continuing education courses;
- Withdrawn course;

Students are billed at the tuition rate associated with their residency (Utah residents billed tuition at the resident rate, non-Utah residents billed at the non-resident rate). If a student on

tuition benefit is a non-resident student, a non-resident tuition waiver will be posted to their tuition bill.

Graduate student enrollments are billed by the Office of Income Accounting by course; if a PhD student is enrolled in credits within the catalog range 7970-7989 (thesis/dissertation), these courses will be billed at a reduced rate. If a PhD student is enrolled in a hybrid of general coursework and dissertation credits in the same semester, dissertation credits will be billed at the reduced rate while general coursework will be billed at the regular graduate rate.

While undergraduate and ineligible repeated courses are not covered by tuition benefit, they can count toward a student's minimum enrollment of 9 credits.

Withdrawn courses are those when a student has removed a course from active enrollment after the semester add/drop deadline, as defined by the Office of the Registrar.

RA 84-Credit Hour Rule

Students who are supported as research assistants (job code 9314) when they have met or exceeded 84 cumulative graduate credits will be responsible for the non-resident portion of their tuition bill. Affected students who have completed required coursework may enroll for thesis/dissertation credits only (9 credits – no more, no less) to avoid the non-resident charges.

SUMMER COURSES AND DISSERTATION TUITION

The following items apply to all graduate students, regardless of their participation in the tuition benefit program:

- Dissertations courses and summer courses are always charged at resident rates, regardless of student residency status.
- Tuition for dissertation courses are charged at a reduced rate. See the Financial and Business Services (FBS) tuition tables and calculators for additional details.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR A TUITION BENEFIT

All students receiving a tuition benefit must meet the minimum financial support requirements – through an assistantship and/or fellowship – paid through the University of Utah for each semester in which a benefit is anticipated.

Fall 2021/Spring 2022 Minimum Support Levels:

1. \$8,070 per semester: 100% tuition benefit
2. \$6,051 per semester: 75% tuition benefit
3. \$4,035 per semester: 50% tuition benefit

Summer 2022 Minimum Support Levels:

1. \$5,380 per semester: 100% tuition benefit
2. \$4,034 per semester: 75% tuition benefit

3. \$2,690 per semester: 50% tuition benefit

No tuition benefit is granted to students receiving less than the minimum required for 50% tuition benefit each semester. Required minimum support level is annually indexed to general salary increases to prevent gradual erosion of established graduate student salaries, stipends, and fellowships.

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Graduate students receiving a tuition benefit are expected to fulfill the responsibilities appropriate to their specific assignments. No student is required to work more than 20 hours a week (0.50 FTE) in order to receive a tuition benefit. Faculty may expect up to 20 hours of work a week (0.50 FTE) from students receiving a 100% tuition benefit, 15 hours a week (0.375 FTE) from students receiving a 75% tuition benefit, and 10 hours a week (0.25 FTE) from students receiving a 50% tuition benefit. Students working one or more on-campus jobs with a combined FTE greater than a 0.74 FTE are ineligible to participate in the Graduate Tuition Benefit Program.

NOTE: In order to participate in the tuition benefit program, student information, including combined salaries, stipends, and FTEs (from university departments) using job codes (9314, 9416, 9330, and 9417), must be entered by the academic “home” department (department in which the student is pursuing a graduate degree) coordinator into the tuition benefit portal. These data must be entered on the Web before the ‘state registration census’ is taken, e.g., 15th day of classes.

RESIDENCY AND MERITORIOUS STATUS

As approved by the University of Utah President and according to Utah law and the Board of Regents’ policy, out-of-state students participating in tuition benefit are exempt from paying nonresident tuition; graduate tuition benefit is posted to tuition bills at the resident tuition rate for the appropriate benefit level (100%, 75%, or 50%), with a non-resident tuition waiver where applicable. Tuition and fees not covered by the tuition benefit are the student’s responsibility. Domestic non-resident graduate students (non-international students) receiving a tuition benefit are eligible to apply for Utah residency upon fulfilling 40 graduate credit hours at a regionally accredited Utah institution of higher education. **Comprehensive and aggressive action should be taken by departments to ensure that eligible students are encouraged to apply for Utah residency once 40 graduate credit hours are reached.** A student’s ability to establish residency will not affect eligibility of a tuition benefit.

(Visit <http://admissions.utah.edu/apply/residency/> for details or residency reclassification, as outlined by the Office of Admissions.)

Graduate meritorious status is established by:

- Admission to the University of Utah as a matriculated graduate student;
- Selection on the basis of merit, determined by written policy in each department, as a supported graduate student receiving a salary or stipend from the University of Utah

under the provisions and subject to the minimum levels of support provided in the Graduate Council guidelines;

- Recommendation of the department chair;
- Maintenance of status of being in good standing in the graduate program, including completion of all required milestone exams and program requirements before departmental deadlines, and maintenance of a 3.0 GPA or higher (except where otherwise approved, such as a 2.0 GPA in the Law School) in the program. GPAs are verified at the end of each academic year. A grade below C- is not accepted for credit toward a graduate degree; some departments further restrict C grades.

RESTRICTIONS

A graduate tuition benefit is available only to graduate students compensated through the University of Utah. The tuition benefit program covers resident tuition and mandatory fees, as well as non-resident tuition waivers where applicable. Differential tuition charged by various university graduate and professional programs is the responsibility of the graduate student, department, and/or college. Students may participate in the tuition benefit program for a limited number of semesters, which need not be sequential. Semester limits for participation in the tuition benefit program are as follows:

1. Students in a master's program who enter with a bachelor's degree are entitled to two years (four semesters) of tuition benefit support.
2. Students in a doctoral program who entered with a bachelor's degree are entitled to five years (10 semesters) of tuition benefit support.
3. Students in a doctoral program who also received their first master's degree at the University of Utah are entitled to five years of tuition benefit support (two years for master's + three additional years for a doctorate).
4. Students entering a doctoral program with a master's degree from another university are entitled to four years (eight semesters) of tuition benefit support.

Doctoral students who fall under categories 2 and 3 above and who have served a minimum of four semesters as full-time TAs (0.50 FTE or 20 hrs/ week) may receive an additional year (two semesters) of tuition benefit support beyond the limits described above. In order for the student to receive this time extension, departments must provide a written request to The Graduate School that includes the student's name and university ID number. These restrictions do not limit the number of years or semesters a program, department, or college may choose to support a student in addition to participation in the tuition benefit program. Established time limits for completion of graduate programs still apply.

Participating students and departments are responsible for maintaining an accurate count of the semesters of tuition benefit support a student has received. A student who receives more terms of tuition benefit than he or she is eligible for may be retroactively billed for the tuition of the ineligible semester(s).

All classifications of tuition benefit-eligible assistantships may qualify for summer tuition benefit, in addition to graduate fellowship recipients, provided they are supported during the summer semester to the minimum support levels, and meet general summer tuition benefit eligibility as outlined above.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE TUITION BENEFIT PROGRAM

The Graduate School administers the Graduate Tuition Benefit Program. Verification of a student's tuition benefit eligibility is the department's responsibility. Eligibility ultimately depends on the availability of funding at the department level. These guidelines are not meant as a guarantee of eligibility or available funding.

Note: If a graduate student received a conditional tuition credit for the semester but (a) withdrew from courses, dropping below the minimum 9 credit hours; (b) received less than the minimal eligible financial support; or (c) in any way did not meet all requirements or restrictions associated with the tuition benefit graduate student requirements or Graduate School policy, the tuition benefits will be rescinded. The student will be billed for tuition and fees at the full, relevant rate for that semester. Department administrators should first diagnose tuition benefit concerns using their semester report available to coordinators in the tuition benefit portal, and escalate issues to the Graduate School when, and if, necessary.

Students are not eligible to receive a tuition benefit after a semester has ended if they were not entered into the tuition benefit portal prior to the date the 'state's registration census' (15th day of classes) is taken. It is a department's responsibility to enter eligible students into the tuition benefit portal a timely manner prior to the campus census deadline for the semester the, date as defined by the Office of the Registrar, in which student expects to receive the benefit. No retroactive benefits are processed.

PETITIONS FOR EXCEPTION TO TUITION BENEFIT POLICY

With a petition from the student's department chair to the dean of The Graduate School, exceptions will be considered for personal emergencies such as illness or family emergency. Petitions related to tuition benefit should be formatted as a letter printed on letterhead. While a student may submit a petition on their own behalf, typically the student's faculty advisor or Department Chair writes the petition. Petitions should be submitted to the Graduate School's Office of Fellowships & Benefits (tuitionbenefit@gradschool.utah.edu), where they are routed to the Dean for review.

Please follow the below guidelines before submitting a petition:

The Tuition Benefit Program (TBP) has been designed to cover most of the cost of the graduate student tuition, but it was never intended to guarantee 100% tuition coverage for all students. In cases where a graduate student exhausts their tuition benefit allotment before completing their degree, it is the Department/Program's responsibility to pursue one of the following options:



Tuition Benefit Program Guidelines

1. If the student is appointed as an RA and their stipend is paid for by a research grant, the PI of the grant can pay the tuition directly from their grant funds. In this case, the department may add the student to extended tuition benefit (XTBP) in order to pay the tuition directly from the grant or activity. The Office of Sponsored Projects has posted guidelines for [paying tuition from grant funds](#).
2. It is also allowable for the tuition to be paid by departmental funds, reimbursed overhead, or through a PI's directly out of their startup account fund. This can be done by adding the student to XTBP and supplying an eligible chartfield for tuition payment.
3. If no other option is available, the student may register for the minimum credit hours necessary to maintain continuous registration (1 credit hour) and pay directly. In some cases, visa and/or student loan or health insurance issues require the student to register for 3 credit hours of dissertation in order to maintain full-time student status. For example, the University's student health plan currently allows 3 credit hours enrollment of dissertation coursework as an alternative to the standard full time graduate student status requirement (9 credit hours).