POLICY NAME
Policy on Tuition Remission for Graduate Students (Research Project Assistants)
Supported by Sponsored Projects

INITIAL POLICY DATE
February 27, 2004

REVISION DATES
October 14, 2004; March 15, 2009; June 25, 2009; January 25, 2017, December 18, 2019

AUTHORIZING OFFICIALS
Richard J. Reeder, Vice President for Research
Eric Wertheimer, Dean of the Graduate School

SCOPE
To define the Graduate School tuition remission policy for graduate student Research Project Assistants working on and supported by institutional or sponsored research projects. This policy applies to all externally funded awards managed by The Research Foundation for The SUNY (RF).
The Graduate School and the Office of the Vice President for Research aim to attract and retain top quality students to Stony Brook University’s graduate degree research programs by offering competitive recruitment packages including excellent salaries, benefits and tuition remission. The purpose of this policy is to advise Principal Investigators on charging directly to sponsored projects a portion of tuition for graduate student Research Project Assistants assigned to and supported by a sponsored project during the Fall and/or Spring semester(s).

POLICY STATEMENT
All proposals for sponsored research, teaching/training, or public service projects that include salary support for graduate student Research Project Assistants must include a request for graduate student tuition remission. Tuition at the current NYS rate for six (6) credits per semester (Fall and Spring only), per graduate student, is to be included in the proposal budget as a direct cost line item. The rate will be set for the lifetime of the award (the length of the committed support) based on the current rate at the time of proposal submission.

GUIDANCE, PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
In circumstances where sponsors allow for tuition and fees, the full amount at the six (6) credit current rate must be budgeted at proposal stage either as a direct cost or as cost sharing when the student will receive tuition assistance directly from the university.

Tuition and fees charged in this manner are exempt from fringe benefits and indirect costs (IDC).

The Graduate School is responsible for coordinating with Financial Aid to ensure eligible students receive tuition remission. The Graduate School is also responsible for transferring
two-thirds of the funds to the appropriate Department Chair or Graduate Program Director and retaining one-third for the Graduate School.

If the Principal Investigator (PI) must add a graduate student Research Project Assistants to a project that did not originally request funding for tuition remission, the PI is responsible for re-budgeting dollars from other direct cost categories to cover tuition remission costs, in accordance with sponsor guidelines.

The Office of Sponsored Programs is responsible for ensuring that tuition remission is included at full and current approved rate in proposals per this policy and identified in the individual proposals in myResearch, and for notifying the Principal Investigator of a resulting sponsor award.

The Office of Grants Management is responsible for charging the tuition remission to the appropriate award(s) and transferring the funds to the Graduate School, except where waivers have been approved. Tuition costs are charged equal to the labor distribution and the period of appointment.

NOTE: This policy will apply to Research Project Assistants supported by BNL and CSHL regardless of funding totals.

PARTIAL AND PRORATED TUITION REMISSION
For students supported as part-time Research Project Assistants on a sponsored award eligible for tuition remission, the Principal Investigator may request prorated partial tuition remission. Such requests must be made to the Dean of the Graduate School or Dean’s delegate at the time of student appointment and will be decided at the Dean’s discretion. Requests for approval for prorated tuition remission should be directed by email to lori.carron@stonybrook.edu.

Tuition remission is assessed according to the number of pay periods students are appointed to the grant.

EXCEPTIONS AND WAIVERS
Exceptions to this policy will be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School or Dean’s delegate in cases where sponsors have a written policy limiting the amount of tuition remission that can be charged to a sponsored project or prohibiting the charging of tuition as a direct cost to the sponsored project. Requests for waiver approvals should be emailed directly to lori.carron@stonybrook.edu before the proposal is submitted to the sponsor.

In addition, waivers of tuition remission may be granted under either of the following circumstances:

1. when the proposal is for a small award where total funding available to the PI(s) for the project will be less than $50,000 per year in direct cost category AND one
full time (equivalent of 0.50 FTE) Research Project Assistant salary is budgeted as a direct cost;

OR

2. when the graduate student being supported is teaching full-time (15-20 hours per week) in addition to the work being conducted as a research assistant.

NOTE: where waivers are authorized by the Chair and Dean of the Graduate School, the “waiver” box should be checked on the graduate student’s appointment form. Graduate Student Appointment forms where a waiver is indicated will be exempt from tuition charges. The Graduate School verifies all indicated waivers.

ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION OF FUNDS
Two-thirds of tuition remission collected will be allocated to and used by the graduate program under which the funded graduate student is enrolled (either to the Chair or Graduate Program Director, depending on where fiscal responsibility for the salary resides). Use of these funds is restricted to graduate program support.

One-third of the tuition remission revenue will be allocated to and administered by the Graduate School; the use of these funds is restricted to stipends or salary support for graduate students (e.g. supplements or program expansion through additional lines).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
The Chair or Graduate Program Director is responsible for reporting annually on the use of tuition remission allocations to their respective Dean, the Vice President for Research, and the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School is responsible for reporting on the use of its tuition remission allocation on an annual basis to the Graduate Council.