



Cost to Support Graduate Students Academic Year 2009-10

To: Graduate Program Directors and Faculty Mentors
From: Nancy Thompson, Associate Dean for Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
Ed Hawrot, Associate Dean for Biology
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Dear Graduate Program Directors and faculty mentors,

Please be aware of the following costs associated with PhD training as you consider your research needs and available resources. The information below is based on Division policy and University policy.

This document and attached chart relate to actual charges that will be applied to accounts. Because some of the faculty costs incurred for students support have changed, it is important that you have this information in advance of making new commitments to student training.

Graduate student charges depend on the category of appointment. Four categories are defined by The Graduate School based on the student's primary duties. These are:

- **Research Assistant (RA):** defined as a student conducting research supported by a research grant awarded to a faculty member (includes NIH R01, NSF,).
- **Teaching Assistant (TA):** defined as a student who is assigned responsibility for approximately 20 hours/week assisting in a Brown course.
- **Trainee (TR):** defined as a student appointed to a training grant such as a T32 or GAANN.
- **Fellow (F):** defined as a student supported by an individual external fellowship or a Division supported fellowship.

Research Assistant

The Graduate School has clarified that RA Charges apply to all RA appointments regardless of:

- *the funding source (including start-up, GIP, any grant source, etc),*
- *institution to which a grant was awarded (i.e. same policy for hospital-based and MBL faculty as for campus-based faculty)*
- *the number of tuition units that a student has accumulated. There is no transition from tuition to "enrollment fee" for RAs.*

Biomed graduate Programs may "bank" funds for grant-supported students who are appointed as RA's during the 3 semester and one summer period (*within first two years of enrollment*) of expected Division support with the understanding that Division support is correspondingly reduced.

Bank eligible funds are limited to the grant's contribution to stipend, one tuition unit per semester, and fees that would otherwise be the responsibility of the Division for the appointment period. Division policy prohibits banking from support by Start-up funds. Students appointed as RA's using EPSCoR Graduate Fellowship Funding, or IMSD Funding are NOT bank-eligible.

If the total cost of graduate student support exceeds that which can be charged to a grant because of a cap such as the NIH zero-level postdoctoral rate (as of FY 2009, this rate is \$37,368/year), tuition takes first priority followed by health fee, health insurance premium, and stipend.

In the case of NIH faculty research grants, graduate student RA charges for 2009-10 in excess of the recently announced \$37,368 NIH postdoctoral cap will be paid by The DIVISION.

Please note that fringe benefit rates apply to RA appointments in the Summer. These fringe rates are automatic and are in addition to the Summer stipend charge. The applicable rate will be announced by the University. For Summer 2009, the minimum fringe benefit rate is 7.5%. Link to the University policy:

http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Controllers_Office/accounting/fringe.html

Teaching Assistant

Teaching Assistant appointments are charged to the Division's Graduate Training account. They are typically assigned to second year pre-doctoral students based on the Graduate Program's requirements of number of semesters of teaching experience and in response to Departmental teaching needs as well as student expertise. A maximum of three semesters may be charged to the Division if these semesters coincide with the Division's commitment to funding for a student and Division fellowship support is forfeited. Only full time pre-doctoral students qualify for these appointments. International students must be evaluated for English proficiency skills and receive appropriate certification by the Center for Language Studies prior to assignment as a TA.

In order to maximize instructional resources, the Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies reserves the authority to determine which semester during each student's second year will correspond to Division funding. Every effort is made to make graduate teaching assistant assignment decisions one or more months in advance of the academic year in consultation with faculty course leaders, the Associate Deans in Biology, Graduate Program Directors and where possible, graduate students to be assigned.

If the Graduate Program chooses to assign a student as a TA and that student is past their Division support period (3 semesters within first 2 years), the Graduate Program will be responsible for supporting that student and should identify an account that can be used for a semester of the student's stipend, one tuition unit, one semester of the health fee and possibly health insurance contribution for any students who entered after August 2006. (If a student were an RA for one semester and a TA for another; no additional insurance contribution would be necessary)

Trainee

Charges to grants for Trainees are determined by the relevant Notice of Grant Award (NOGA), institutional policy and allowable limits as specified by funding agencies.

For training grants awarded to Brown, the Division will supplement stipend, tuition, and fees as part of its institutional commitment while the student is within **their first three years** of enrollment. **For students in their 4th year and above** who are supported by training grants; the mentor and/or Graduate Program will be responsible for supplementing the student's stipend.

For pre-doctoral training grants awarded to institutions other than Brown, the Division will supplement the tuition cost only within the first three years. Mentors at off-campus institutions will be responsible for supplementing stipend.

For 4th year and above students, mentors or the Graduate Programs will be required to provide an account that will be needed to supplement the stipend. The Graduate Program Bank Account will be used as the default support mechanism if no account is identified at the time of appointment.

After 24 tuition units are accumulated by a student appointed as a trainee, tuition is no longer charged for Trainee appointments and the University “Enrollment Fee” applies.

Training Grants will be charged for allowable trainee health insurance premium costs. In 2009-10, the allowable amount of health insurance is \$1450.

Graduate Programs appointing students to training grants during the expected period of Division support, may “bank” actual stipend and health insurance premium dollars relieved to the Division. Tuition up to one tuition unit per semester may also be banked. Division support for the student is decreased correspondingly for each appointment period (semester or summer) banked. The program may “bank” health insurance premium dollars for students in their first year only.

Fellow

Division fellowship: Entering pre-doctoral graduate students are typically appointed as Division fellows with costs fully covered by the Division. Students are expected to engage in full time studies and make satisfactory progress, justifying continued support. Graduate Program Directors are responsible for evaluating progress each semester and reporting on this to the Graduate Program, Student, and Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Annual progress reports on academic standing are required by the Dean of the Graduate School for all full time graduate students as specified in the Graduate School Handbook and website.

Student-won external fellowships: Students holding external fellowships are appointed as Fellows. The fellowship may be held at the time of application to graduate school; these applicants with merit-based external awards are highly sought. All students once matriculated are encouraged and assisted in efforts to apply for external fellowships to fund a portion of their graduate training. These efforts enhance the quality and recognition of graduate Programs, foster student career success, and alleviate financial burden to faculty mentors.

- **Stipend:**

If the fellowship awarded provides NIH NRSA level OR NSF FELLOWSHIP level of tuition and stipend, the Division will supplement the stipend to reach the \$26,000 stipend during the student’s first three years. Once the student is in year 4 and above, the Program or Mentor must identify an account # to supplement the stipend to the \$26,000 level.

If the fellowship award provides stipend funding only and the Student is within the Divisional support period, then the Division will provide the supplement to the stipend and tuition and fees support. The Program will be allowed to bank the stipend that the fellowship provides.

A stipend incentive plan encourages student efforts to secure fellowship awards and may also be a factor in attracting an applicant with an external fellowship to a Biomed graduate Program. For 2009-10, if the total fellowship award is equal to or greater than \$20,800 (80% of \$26,000), the student will receive a stipend bonus of \$150/month (\$1800/year).

- The stipend incentive comes from the Division’s graduate account for students who are in Years 1 – 3.
- For students in Years 4+, the Program / Mentor will be responsible for the \$150 per month bonus.

- **Tuition / Health Fee:**
Tuition and the health fee will be charged to an external fellowship up to the allowable rate specified in the award notice for students who have earned less than 24 tuition units. After 24 tuition units, the fellowship will be charged the Enrollment Fee. If the external fellowship support is provided for a student during the period of Division support, the Graduate Program may bank the funds that are relieved up to one tuition unit per semester.

If the external fellowship does not provide funds sufficient for one tuition unit per semester (25% rate) or enrollment fee (which ever is applicable) ,the health fee and health insurance contribution during the years past Division support, the Graduate Program will provide an account to cover the balance. If, during the period of expected Division support, an external fellowship is insufficient to cover a tuition unit, the balance will be considered institutional commitment.

- **Health Insurance**
Health insurance premium charges will be made to student external fellowships in the amounts allowable by fellowship policy up to the NRSA amount. For NRSA awards, this is currently \$1450 of the budgeted “Training Related Expense” category. Banking applies for health insurance premium support alleviated during the student’s first year only.

If the fellowship does NOT provide for health insurance, the Graduate Program or mentor must supply an account # to cover the normally expected health insurance mentor contribution (\$1450 – in 2009-10)

- **Banking:** Students admitted under the MBL / PROVOST support program or under the PROVOST / CORPORATION support program are not eligible for BioMed banking.

See attached chart re Student support

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