

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Graduate Assistants and Fellows

NUMBER: 5:22

To allow the universities to compete effectively when recruiting highly qualified prospective graduate students, the Board has adopted a special tuition rate for graduate assistants and graduate fellows for both on-campus and off-campus courses or provides the ability to waive tuition and some fees.

1. Special Tuition Rate for Graduate Assistants and Fellows

Resident graduate assistants and resident graduate student fellows shall be assessed fifty-three percent (53%) of the resident graduate tuition rate for all on-campus courses, in addition to 100% of the general activity fee and discipline fees. Nonresident graduate assistants and nonresident graduate student fellows shall be assessed sixty-three percent (63%) of the resident graduate tuition rate for all on-campus courses, in addition to 100% of the general activity fee and discipline fees. Any graduate assistants taking distance, off-campus, or Center courses will receive a tuition reduction equal to the reduction applied to the resident graduate assistant on-campus tuition rate. The waived tuition is part of the compensation for the graduate work.

- A. Eligibility for this special tuition rate is limited to graduate assistants and fellows who are:
 - 1) Unconditionally admitted to a graduate degree program and are registered at the university for its required minimum number of credit hours; and,
 - 2) Awarded an assistantship or fellowship at or above the minimum rate established annually by the Board. Students who have received a qualifying graduate assistantship or fellowship for the preceding fall and spring are automatically eligible for the special graduate assistant tuition rate for the following summer.
- B. Graduate assistants and fellows who are eligible for this special tuition rate at one institution are eligible at other system institution(s).
- C. All graduate assistants and fellows not meeting these eligibility requirements shall be charged the appropriate regular tuition rate established by the Board.

2. Waived Tuition and Fees for Graduate Assistants and Fellows

Schools may waive on-campus graduate tuition and all program fees as part of the compensation for the required graduate work. The General Activity Fee will not be waived.

If they decide to waive tuition they shall also waive the tuition for distance, off-campus, and Center courses taken

- A. Eligibility for waived tuition and fees is limited to graduate assistants and fellows who are:
 - 1) Unconditionally admitted to a graduate degree program and are registered at the university for its required minimum number of credit hours; and,
 - 2) Awarded an assistantship or fellowship at or above the minimum rate established annually by the Board. Students who have received a qualifying graduate assistantship or fellowship for the preceding fall and spring are automatically eligible for the following summer.
- B. Courses taken from other universities qualify for the waiver.
- C. All graduate assistants and fellows not meeting these eligibility requirements shall be charged the appropriate tuition and fee rates established by the Board.
- D. Universities that waive tuition and fees will need to reimburse other universities for the waived tuition and fees related to courses taken by graduate assistants and fellows from other universities.
- E. Universities will still be required to pay HEFF and contribute to system funds for all tuition credit hours waived under this program.
- F. A university must select one of the above compensation methods for all graduate assistants in any given academic year. If an institution decides to change their method, they must notify the Board office by October 1 and the change will be acted upon during the next annual tuition and fee setting process and become effective the following summer.

3. Compensation

The Board annually establishes a minimum stipend to be paid to graduate assistants. Graduate assistants are expected to work a full semester to receive the full semester compensation. Graduate assistants are expected to work the full four-week session to receive the full four-week session compensation. The minimum compensation may be prorated accordingly if the graduate student does not work the full semester or four week session (as applicable).

4. Non-Faculty Exempt Classification

Graduate assistants and graduate student fellows are considered staff members, but they are not employed in a permanent classification. Any grievance arising from this employment shall be brought under the non-faculty exempt procedures (Policy 4:8). The primary purposes of a graduate assistantship or graduate student fellowship are to provide students with professional experience and the necessary financial resources to attend a graduate program.

**SOURCE: BOR, March 1993; June 1994; December 1995; October 2002;
October 2004; December 2010; December 2015; May 2016.**