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Subject Tuition on Research Grants

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Memorandum

To: Faculty

Date: October 14, 2004

This is a follow up to my memo of February 27, 2004 that laid out a policy to charge part of tuition costs for research assistants (RA's) to research grants. My memo elicited a number of concerns about the impact of the proposed approach on the way we have been supporting graduate students as research assistants, and also questions as to whether certain types of grants, or sources of RA support, would be exempted.

As a consequence, I formed a small, informal group of senior department chairs to advise me and Lawrence Martin, Dean of the Graduate School, on implementing the tuition charge policy. The group included Mike Dudley, Paul Grannis, Judy Lochhead, Lorne Mendell, Jeff Pessin, Clint Rubin, Nancy Squires, and Teng-fong Wong. We discussed all important issues or questions that had been raised with me, Lawrence, or with any of the advisory group members. The present memo describes some modifications, or adds details, to the elements of the policy described in my earlier memo.

To reduce the financial impact of the new policy, and to make equal the cost of supporting beginning students compared to senior students, the amount of tuition recovered for all RAs will be limited to six credits at the New York State resident rate (currently \$3,450 per year), rather than full time tuition as originally proposed. Any balance of tuition paid from University tuition scholarship funds can (and should) still be listed as matching. The four-page RF form is being amended so that PI's can indicate whether tuition has been requested.

To support departments and programs that offer recruiting packages that include support in the summer before formal entry into the Graduate School, the Provost will provide a tuition scholarship to enable registration during this first summer. This is necessary because the INS requires that entering students be enrolled from the beginning of their residency.

To encourage younger faculty, faculty in less well funded disciplines, or for special circumstances involving privately funded stipends or sponsors whose printed policy prohibits payment of tuition, waivers of this policy may be requested from the Dean of the Graduate School at time of submission. The guidelines for approval of

such waivers for small grant proposals are that the award (and total available funding to the PIs for the project area) will be less than \$50K per year AND that >50% of direct costs are budgeted for student stipends. Waiver of the policy will be accounted by showing a full tuition scholarship as university matching funding for the proposal.

Recognizing that some programs support RA's on grants or SBF funds who are actually teaching full time (15-20 hours), tuition recovery will be waived in such cases. This waiver can be obtained by request of the Department Chair to the Dean of the Graduate School.

As previously announced, tuition charges will begin Spring 2005 for RAs funded on an award that resulted from a proposal submitted after March 15, 2004. For each RA on the payroll at snapshot in Spring 2005, the proposal submission date for the grant number that provides salary support will be determined. PI's will be billed if a proposal has been submitted after March 15, 2004.

As stated in the first memo, two thirds of revenue collected will be used by the graduate program to which the funded student belongs (either to chair or GPD depending on where fiscal responsibility for stipends resides). The funds are to be used for graduate program support (first, to replace Presidential and University fellowship funding that will be withdrawn as other funding streams become available). Responding to a few concerns, I want to emphasize that the college deans will not tax this money.

The remaining third of the revenue will be administered by the Graduate School. The use of these funds will be restricted to stipends. Planned use is to maintain and to enhance stipend supplements currently in place, and to enable program expansion through funding for additional recruitment lines. Use of these GS managed funds will be reported annually to the Graduate Council for review.

Based on the current number of RA's and the new rules, this program will, in a few years, recover about \$2.4M from research grants of which \$1.6M will be used directly by programs. The gradual withdrawal of Presidential and University fellowship funding for recruitment lines will reduce stipend funds available to graduate programs by about \$1M, which will be more than offset by the return of \$1.6M. Stipend supplement allocations will be reduced starting in Fall 05 by the amount of tuition returned to the program (so as to maintain the current total amount of funds available).

These policies will apply to students supported by Brookhaven National Laboratory, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and to industrial sponsors. In the case of CSHL, collection of tuition from grants and the return of those funds to the relevant graduate program at Stony Brook will be tied to a gradual elimination of the \$2K per student per year that CSHL has been contributing for use in recruiting activities for our graduate programs.

The discussions with the chairs group were extremely valuable in refining details of the tuition recovery policy, and I am very grateful to each of the group members for their wisdom and help. It should not be assumed that all members of this group endorse a policy of partial recovery of tuition costs from research grants, but the adjustments I am announcing in this memo are ones that the majority of the group consider acceptable.