The Graduate School
Graduate Student Funding Entry Information

TGS Funding Team email: tgs-fa@northwestern.edu

Terms/Definitions

- **Chartstring**: A code used to identify a specific source of funds. Used in myHR and NU Financials (i.e. 610-1234567-67891011-01-60076). Chartstrings beginning with 110 are shorter in length.
  - **Account code**: Specifies the type of expense (or revenue) charged to a chartstring. The last set of numbers in a chartstring (i.e. 60076 shown above denotes Research Assistant stipend).
- **Dual Career (Dual Degree) and Non-degree students**: Dual Career students are pursuing more than one degree at the same time, such as MD/PhD and JD/PhD. Non-degree students are taking courses but have not yet been admitted into a degree program.
- **Empid**: The employee ID, also referred to as the student ID in the case of students.
- **myHR**: The HR/payroll system used for anyone on NU payroll. Entries in myHR determine when and how much someone will be paid. Stipend (paycheck) funding information is entered in this system. Funding changes can be entered on-line in myHR, but other changes such as pay rate and appointment end dates need to be made on paper and sent to Payroll.
- **Graduate Assistant/Teaching Assistant**: Students in these positions are usually on TGS funds allocated to programs. They are considered to be performing “service”. Referred to as GAs or TAs.
- **Interface**: Once a year in the fall there is an interface between SES and myHR. During this interface, stipend data from SES is sent to myHR, eliminating the need for manual entry in myHR.
- **Item Type**: The SES software is not set up to use chartstrings to identify funding. Instead a code called an item type is used as an identifier for the chartstring. For each chartstring down to the account code level, at least one 7 digit item type is to be established. The two most common item types are one for stipend and one for tuition. Item types starting with 61 designate TGS funding, as do item with where the descriptions are words. Item types starting with 62 designate non-TGS funding and will include the chartstring in the description. Requests for any item types which need to be set up should be sent to tgs-fa@northwestern.edu.
- **Late fees**: Late fees may be applied to a student’s account if tuition funding is not entered or is not entered in full. After funding is entered/corrected, contact Student Accounts to remove the late fee.
- **RAS**: Research Assistant Scholarship. Partial tuition support for students funded as RAs. This scholarship covers the difference between the tuition billed and the portion covered by the Principal Investigator (PI). RAS is only used for positions funded on account code 60076.
- **Research Assistants**: Research Assistants (RAs) are generally paid on grants/department funds outside of TGS. They are considered to be performing “service”. RA positions generate an effort report.
- **Scholarships/Fellowships**: Scholarship/Fellowship appointments are often on TGS administered funds. They are not considered to be performing “service”. Usually referred to as Fellowships. In SES, fellowships are stipend and/or tuition, scholarships are tuition only.
- **SES/Smart Pages**: The Student Enterprise System (SES) is the student information system. Stipend funding information is entered in this system, but does not trigger a paycheck (except at the time of the annual interface described above). Tuition (and health insurance subsidy) funding is also entered in this system, and this does result in the payment being applied to the student’s account. Smart Pages is a user friendly interface within SES used for entering funding.
- **Specials Request**: Some sources of external funding do not include enough funds to cover the full tuition and/or the Northwestern minimum stipend rate. In these cases programs can request support from TGS to make up the difference. In other situations the University has committed to provide support in a “cost share” agreement. The online Specials Request Tool is used to request this support. When requesting the TGS support on this tool, do not make those entries in SES, as TGS staff will do so. Backup documentation needs to be attached to the request concerning the prior agreement by TGS or the external award agreement.
- **Stipend**: Pay for graduate students is referred to as a stipend rather than a salary. They are paid monthly on the last working day of the month.
- **TGS**: The Graduate School (TGS) partners with academic programs and schools to provide policies, support and services relating to graduate students.
- **Tip Sheet**: A sheet prepared by TGS FA and sent to each program containing info such as stipend rates, tuition rates, and item types needed to enter funding.

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Grad Student Funding Tips and Best Practices

- Ideally funding should be entered in the summer/early fall for the entire upcoming fiscal year (September-August). In some cases funding is entered quarter by quarter before the start of each quarter. Any funding entered/changed after the interface will require entry in both SES and myHR and possibly paper appointment forms.
- Funding entered in SES before the fall interface deadline will be included in the interface between SES and myHR. In this case no myHR entries are required, and there is no need to submit hard copy appointment forms.
- For funding purposes, the quarters are:
  - Fall: September-November
  - Winter: December-February
  - Spring: March-May
  - Summer: June-August
- While funding can be entered/changed in the middle of a quarter, it is not ideal and could result in missing/incorrect paychecks, and the need to submit payroll journals for any paychecks that were charged to an incorrect chartstring.
- After the fall interface, make sure any necessary appointment forms are submitted to Payroll by the appointment form deadline, usually about the middle of the month before the pay date. The information on the appointment form is the most important part of the process as it is what triggers a paycheck to be issued. The form determines how much the student will be paid, the start date, and when the appointment will end. Pay special attention to the appointment end date to ensure that it does not expire. If you are only changing the funding and everything else stays the same, you can enter the change in myHR and you do not need to submit an appointment form (if you are deployed). Also remember to update SES.
- Some programs/departments pay their students in a very standardized, consistent way. In these cases bulk funding entry in Smart Pages can save time and effort.
- Other programs pay their students on different types of positions, on different chartstrings and even at different pay rates. In these cases funding needs to be entered individually for each student.
- In general, tuition should be funded from the same chartstring used for the stipend. If the stipend is split between more than one source of funding, the tuition should be split in the same proportions, particularly for sponsored research projects.
- When a student is paid off of TGS funding (Item type starting in 61), you can enter the funding in SES, but TGS staff will enter the appointment in myHR. Please email TGS-FA@northwestern.edu to notify them that you have entered TGS funding for a student in SES.
- When communicating with TGS or others at Northwestern about a particular student, it is a good practice to include the student’s legal name (not nickname) and emplid in the subject line of the email. At a minimum make sure that names and emplid’s are included in the body of the message when communicating about any student issues.
- Funding cannot be changed retroactively between account codes 60076 (RA) and 78050 (fellowship).
- Funding for dual career and non-degree students needs to be submitted on a Dual Degree Non-degree spreadsheet and TGS will complete the data entry in SES.

**Rates and Codes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Minimum Stipend Rates (Monthly)</strong></th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship</td>
<td>$2490</td>
<td>$2565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad. Asst./Research Asst.</td>
<td>$2566</td>
<td>$2643</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tuition and RAS Rates (Quarterly)</strong></th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition Full Rate (1st 8 quarters)</td>
<td>$16808</td>
<td>$17413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition Advanced Rate (9th+ quarters)</td>
<td>$4202</td>
<td>$4353</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAS Full Rate</td>
<td>$13330</td>
<td>$13810</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAS Advanced Rate</td>
<td>$724</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator (PI) share</td>
<td>$3478</td>
<td>$3603</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Common account codes used in funding entry**
- 60076 Research Assistant stipend
- 78050 Scholarship/Fellowship stipend
- 60070 Graduate Assistant/Teaching Assistant stipend
- 78020 Tuition and fees