

The Graduate School
Graduate Student Funding General Information

Please direct all inquiries to TGS Student Funding Team tgs-fa@northwestern.edu

Terms/Definitions

- **Chartstring** – Code used in myHR and NU Financials to identify a specific source of funds (e.g., 610-1234567-67891011-01-60076). Chartstrings beginning with 110 are shorter.
 - **Account Code** – Indicates type of expense (or revenue) charged to a chartstring. The last set of numbers in a chartstring (e.g., 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 (e.g., MD/PhD, JD/PhD). Non-degree students are taking courses, but have not yet been admitted to a degree program.
- **Empl ID** – Employee ID. Also referred to as the student ID.
- **myHR** – The HR/payroll system. Entries in myHR determine when and how much students are paid. Stipend (paycheck) funding information is entered in this system. Funding changes can be entered online, but other changes (such as pay rate and appointment end dates) need to be made on paper and sent to Payroll.
- **Fiscal Year** – September 1st to August 31st
- **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** – An annual transfer of data between SES/SmartPages and myHR which generally occurs early to mid-September. Eliminates the need to submit Payroll forms.
- **Item Type** – SES/SmartPages cannot use chartstrings to identify funding. Codes called item types are used to identify chartstrings. For each chartstring, down to the account code level, at least one 7 digit item type is created. The two most common item types are stipend and tuition. Item types starting with 61 designate TGS funding; item types starting with 62 designate non-TGS funding. Requests for new item types can be made by completing the [Item Type Request Form](#).
- **Late fees** – Late fees may be applied to students’ accounts when tuition funding is not entered in a timely manner, or not entered in full. For late fees related to program/department errors with funding, email [Student Accounts](#) to request a removal of the fee.
- **RAS** (Research Assistant Scholarship) – Partial tuition support from TGS for students funded as RAs. Covers the difference between the tuition billed, and the tuition amount covered by the Principal Investigator (PI). RAS is only used for positions funded on account code 60076.
- **Research Assistants (RA)** – Generally paid on grants/department funds outside of TGS, and considered to be performing a “service.” RA positions generate an effort report.
- **Scholarships/Fellowships** – Often on TGS administered funds, and not considered to be performing “service.” Generally referred to as “fellowships.” In SES/SmartPages, fellowships are stipend and/or tuition; scholarships are tuition only.
- **SES/Smart Pages** – 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.
- **Stipend** – Monthly pay for graduate students. Paid on the last working day of each month.
- **TGS** – The Graduate School (TGS) partners with academic programs and schools to provide policies, support, and services relating to graduate students.
- **AFRG** (Annual Funding Reference Guide) – Guide prepared and distributed to each program prior to the new fiscal year by TGS Student Funding. The guide contains pertinent student funding information, such as stipend and tuition rates, item types, etc. specific to each program.

Graduate Student Funding Tips and Best Practices

- Ideally, funding for the entire fiscal year should be entered prior to the interface, which generally occurs early to mid-September. Funding can be entered quarter by quarter prior to the Payroll position appointment form deadline for the 1st month of a new quarter. Funding entered/changed after the interface requires entries to be made in SES/SmartPages, and position appointment forms to be submitted to Payroll.
- Funding entered in SES/SmartPages before the fall interface deadline is included in the interface between SES and myHR. No position appointment forms are required.
- For funding purposes, the quarters are:

Fall	September, October, November
Winter	December, January, February
Spring	March, April, May
Summer	June, July, August

- Funding can be entered/changed in the middle of a quarter. This situation is not ideal, and could result in missing/incorrect paychecks, and payroll journals.
- After the interface, any necessary position appointment forms should be submitted to Payroll by the position appointment form deadline, usually mid-month. Submitting the position appointment form, completed accurately, prior to the Payroll deadline is vital to ensure the student is paid correctly and on time.
- The position appointment form determines the student pay rate, the position start date, and the position end date. Confirm all information is accurate, especially ensuring the appointment end date does not expire. If only the funding source (chartstring) is changing, and the remaining information is the same, update the position funding in myHR and SES/SmartPages; there is no need to submit a position appointment form.
- Some programs fund students in a very standardized, consistent way. Bulk entry in SES/SmartPages can save time and effort.
- Other programs fund students on different types of positions, on different chartstrings and even at different pay rates. Funding generally needs to be entered individually for each student in these situations.
- In general, tuition is funded from the same chartstring as stipend. If the stipend is split between more than one source of funding, tuition should be split in the same proportions, particularly for sponsored research projects.
- The TGS staff creates the appointment for students paid on TGS funds. Changes made to TGS stipend funding in SES/SmartPages notifies the TGS staff to create or modify appointments in myHR.
- Include the student's legal name and empl ID in the subject line of emails when communicating to TGS Graduate Student Funding
- Funding cannot be changed retroactively between account codes 60076 (RA) and 78050 (fellowship) due to tax regulations and processes.
- Submit funding for dual career students on a [Dual Degree spreadsheet](#). TGS enters the funding in SES/SmartPages.

Stipend Rate (Monthly Minimum)	2020-2021	2021-2022
Stipend (fellowship & assistantship)	\$2,792	\$2,848
Tuition Rates (Quarterly)	2020-2021	2021-2022
Tuition Full Rate (1 st eight quarters)	\$18,689	\$18,689
Tuition Advanced Rate (9 th quarter +)	\$4,672	\$4,672
RAS Full Rate	\$14,822	\$14,822
RAS Advanced Rate	\$805	\$805
PI RAS Share	\$3,867	\$3,867

Common Account Codes

- 60076** research assistant stipend
78050 scholarship/fellowship stipend
60070 graduate assistant/teaching assistant stipend
78020 tuition and fees