

Non-Resident Tuition Waiver

Program Description

2009/10

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Non-Resident Tuition Waiver (NRTW) program is to serve as a **recruitment tool** to assist departments in attracting high caliber international and domestic non-resident students. Additionally, a portion of these awards is used as a means to increase the overall number of graduate students enrolling at SDSU.

DEFINITION:

The term, NRTW, applies to international and domestic non-residents. This waiver exempts these students from paying the non-resident fee (\$339/unit). Those receiving the waiver must pay the same fees (registration and student fees) as California residents.

The tuition waiver program is authorized by the California Education Code (§89707) and limits the number of waivers to 25% of the university's non-resident graduate population. The tuition waiver program must adhere to certain criteria established by Chancellor's Office Executive Order (#605) and policies of the SDSU Graduate Affairs.

CRITERIA:

To qualify for a NRTW, students must fulfill all of the following criteria.

- a) The nominee must be a **new** international, or **new** domestic non-resident graduate student in good academic standing at his/her previous university, that demonstrates strong academic potential.

Alternatively, the nominee can be a continuing international student at SDSU who had previously been recruited with a NRTW and is in good academic standing at SDSU. Students previously admitted to SDSU on international exchange programs may be eligible if they matriculate into a program as a new recruit.
- b) The nominee must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0. If the GPA falls below 3.0 but remains at 2.75, or above during the first semester of a waiver, and the student is doing well in his/her TA/GA or other assignment, a petition can be submitted by the department to request that the NRTW continue for the following semester. Students will be considered only once for such an exception. The petition must describe how the department is counseling the student to effect academic changes that are likely to result in improvement of the GPA to a minimum of 3.0 by the end of the next semester. The student must also submit a petition stating that his/her TA/GA assignment did not negatively affect his/her academic performance, and that s/he understands that they must achieve a 3.0 overall by the end of the next semester in order to retain the NRTW. No student will receive an appointment in subsequent semesters if his/her overall GPA remains lower than 3.0.
- c) The nominee must be employed on campus (TA/GA/RA) 50% and enrolled in at least 6 units, or 3 units of thesis in the final semester, only.

For those unable to be employed 50%, students must be enrolled in at least 10 units (Chancellor's Office Executive Order), and be employed on campus at least 5 hrs/week*. Departments may use

a variable unit (1-4) Independent Study course in order to allow the student to meet the minimum of 10 units.

- d) The nominee must not exceed the semester limit for NRTWs. Domestic non-residents are limited to one academic year (they should become a California resident during that period). International doctoral students are limited to 5 academic years of NRTWs, while international masters students are limited to 2.5 years of NRTWs. **In the letter of offer, the department is responsible for notifying students of these term limits and, in the case of domestic non-residents, the department is responsible for notifying students about the process of attaining residency in advance of the residency determination dates (Sept 20 for fall, and Jan 26 for spring semester).**
- e) The nominated student must show good and continual progress toward fulfilling his/her program of study. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of six units each semester (or three units of 799 or 899 during their final research semester), which should generally be courses in the approved program of study.

* With prior approval from the Office of Graduate Affairs, an NRTW may be granted without employment on campus; however, students must be enrolled in at least 10 units to qualify. In most cases, it is preferred to have some evidence of department financial support for a student to be competitive for an NRTW.

PRIORITIES FOR NRTW AWARDS

1. Continuing international non-residents who were recruited with a NRTW (within specified limits)
2. New doctoral and new MFA students
3. Merit scholarship recipients (e.g., Fulbright)
4. New non-residents in programs which show potential for enrollment growth (with prior approval by GRA).
5. Students from funded grants in which non-resident tuition waiver was included as cost-sharing (with notification and approval by GRA prior to grant submission).
6. Other new domestic and international non-resident students

PROCESS: Note that the following 8 items are NEW FOR 2009

1- Graduate Affairs will accept nominations only via web-based nomination forms.

Use the web-based NRTW Nomination Form, which can be found at the following URL:

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gra/grad/forgradadv.html>

Be sure to use the web-based form entitled:

Non-resident Tuition Waiver Nomination Form Fall 2009

2- Waiver nominations will be accepted only from graduate advisors or their designated staff, and only from the program(s) with which that advisor is associated.

3- An e-mail receipt of each waiver nomination will be automatically delivered to the graduate advisor and Graduate Affairs.

4- Waiver allocations will be made on/near **March 17, 2009**

5- Programs will then be free to offer waivers to the students they nominated (i.e. if 10 students were nominated, and we approved all 10 nominations as potential awardees, but we allocated only 5 waivers, the program is free to use those 5 waivers for any of the 10 approved students).

6- If a program has not used all their allocated waivers and wants to offer waivers to students whom we have not previously reviewed, they must submit new nominations for those students.

7- On or before **May 1, 2009**, all programs must notify Ann Van Buskirk in Graduate Affairs about the status of all waivers, either as awarded or not used.

8- Programs are responsible for the following:

- using the waivers to attract students who would otherwise be unlikely to come to SDSU
- offering no more waivers than allocated by Graduate Affairs,
- offering waivers only to qualified students, and
- selecting students of the highest caliber possible for waivers.

New Students: At the beginning of the Fall and Spring semesters, departments will receive a call for NRTW nominations from Graduate Affairs.

Continuing Students: Departments must renew NRTWs for continuing students each semester. For renewal purposes, only the NRTW nomination needs to be submitted by the deadline date. The department is responsible for insuring that all students continue to meet the criteria for continuation of the NRTW (see above).

Employment and Enrollment: Note that the official processing of the NRTW cannot occur without verification of employment, e.g., the STC (Student Terms and Conditions for TA or GA appointment) and the ATF (Academic Transaction Form). For those with a merit scholarship or RA appointment, documentation must also be provided with the nomination. For those with a SDSU Research Foundation appointment, verification of employment must also be provided; please use the attached document for this purpose. The NRTW form asks for a projection of the number of units in which the student will be enrolling (program units and other units). All students will receive full non-resident tuition waivers for all enrolled units (Graduate Affairs will verify units at census). No partial waivers will be awarded.

OTHER INFORMATION

When replacing a TA/GA/RA, a new NRTW request must be made for the student assuming the role. Do not assume that the replacement student will automatically receive a tuition waiver. Where applicable, the student stepping down will be responsible for paying the additional \$339 per unit of non-resident tuition. Please discuss these situations with Graduate Affairs in as timely a manner as possible.

If a NRTW is requested as part of a grant application (i.e. as cost sharing), you must notify Graduate Affairs at the time you apply for your grant so that possible “placeholders” may be set aside for the students in the event that the grant is funded.

No foreign student may work more than 20 hours per week on campus. This is a requirement enforced by Homeland Security (formerly INS).

Given the constraints of the Education Code, Homeland Security, and relevant unions, we must follow these policies in a consistent manner. Please do not ask for exceptions.

If you have questions, please contact Ann Van Buskirk, (x4-4163) or stop by Graduate Affairs in Student Services East (SSE Room 1410). We will be happy to assist you. Thank you for your cooperation.

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