

Graduate tuition waivers in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources (CAFSNR)

This document outlines the policies and guidelines for graduate tuition waivers in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources (CAFSNR), effective starting Fall Semester of 2026.

Eligibility and General Policies

- **Graduate Assistant (GA) Employment:** Graduate students holding full- (20 hrs/week) or part-time (≥10 hrs/week) assistantships/fellowships are eligible for CAFSNR tuition waivers. The full-time GAs will receive full (100%) tuition waivers. Part-time GAs are only eligible to receive half (50%) tuition waivers.
 - Students not employed as a GA or employed as a GA for less than 10 hours per week are not eligible for a tuition waiver.
- **Graduate Service Assistantships:** Tuition waivers for graduate service assistantships provided by units not within CAFSNR will still be supported by the College in general.
- **Accelerated Degree Programs (BS to MS):** Students enrolled in accelerated degree programs are eligible for a full waiver of base tuition on their graduate credits if they hold a minimum of a half-time assistantship (10 hrs/week). The tuition waiver does not apply to undergraduate credits. This exception applies during the time period when students have not yet completed their undergraduate degree. Once the student transitions to full graduate standing, they are no longer considered under the accelerated degree program provision.
- **Tuition Rate:** The ND in-state tuition rate (called GA Tuition Rate) will be charged to all students hired as a GA working 10 hours or more per week or 160 hours per semester regardless of any waiver. This applies to both domestic and international students.
- **Degree and Academic Standing:** Students on Academic Probation are not eligible for a tuition waiver. Students may regain eligibility upon returning to good academic standing. Students must be active in a degree-seeking program to be eligible for an assistantship.
- **Tuition Sponsorship and Fellowship:** Students in direct tuition sponsorship or fellowship agreements with external organizations, where tuition is paid directly by the sponsoring organization (e.g., a corporate employer or foreign government paying tuition on behalf of the student) rather than through an NDSU-administered grant or contract, are not eligible for a Graduate Assistant tuition waiver. The GA Tuition Rate will also not be utilized. This clause does not apply to sponsorship or benefits from the US military to active service members and veterans.

Credit Limits:

- **Maximum Credit Limits:** Graduate tuition waivers can only be applied to the maximum number of credits required to complete a graduate degree program; an additional 3 credits are allowed for a master's program, while an additional 6 credits are allowed for the entirety of a doctoral graduate degree program. This breaks down as:
 - Master's = 33 credits
 - Total across doctoral program = 96 credits
- **Graduate Certificates:** It is strongly encouraged that certificate credits be incorporated into the degree program whenever possible. Graduate assistants who add a certificate that is not integrated with their degree program and/or plan of study may have a one-time extension of an additional 9 credits covered by a tuition waiver. This extension of 9 additional credits is allowed only once during a student's graduate program (42 credits for master's OR 105 waiver credits total across the entirety of a doctoral program).

- **Transfer Credits:** Transfer graduate credits from other institutions are included in the total maximum limit for the tuition waiver credits at NDSU. These credit limits apply to all graduate credits, regardless of whether or not they were covered by a tuition waiver at NDSU.
- **Beyond Maximum Limit:** Graduate students can enroll for more credits beyond the maximum tuition waiver limit, but these extra credits will not be covered by the tuition waivers. The additional credits will be charged at the same graduate assistantship rate and can be funded by the student or other sources, such as grants.
 - Students who have exceeded the credit limit and still need to finish their disquisition may register in a fee-based 898 Continuing Enrollment course at a rate of \$150.00 per credit, if eligible. The 898 Continuing Enrollment credits are not covered by the GA tuition waiver. Students who are not yet graduating and utilize this option will be required to enroll in the graduate assistantship minimum enrollment requirement of 6 credits during fall and spring semesters. Students who are in their final graduating semester may enroll in one (1) continuing enrollment credit as a one-time exception. Students who seek this option as Graduate Assistants are still liable to otherwise follow Graduate Assistantship policies.
 - Students holding an F-1 or J-1 visa may not be eligible for the 898 credits, and should consult with their international advisor for full details.

Waiver Coverage and Exceptions

- **Coverage:** All graduate tuition waivers cover only the GA base tuition rate amount and do not include any differential tuition or mandatory student fees. Waivers do not cover audited courses, undergraduate or professional courses, or Cooperative Education credits.
- **Exceptional Circumstances:** In exceptional circumstances, students may be granted a tuition waiver for credits beyond the maximum tuition waiver limit. The request to waive tuition for additional credits must be submitted by the graduate student's mentor and approved by the academic unit leader that houses the graduate program and the Associate Dean of CAFSNR.

Credit Enrollment Requirements

- **Minimum Enrolled Credits Per Semester:** Full- and part-time GA students are required to enroll in a minimum of 6 credits during the fall and spring semesters.
 - Students in their final semester can enroll in fewer than 6 credits to complete their plan of study or program curriculum (one-time only).
 - This minimum number of enrolled credits does not apply to accelerated degree program students while still enrolled as an undergraduate student. Once the student transitions to full graduate standing, they are no longer considered under the accelerated degree program provision and must meet standard graduate student minimum enrollments.
- **Summer Semester Requirements:** Students will be eligible to receive a tuition waiver during the summer semester provided they 1) hold an assistantship during the summer, or 2) they have received a tuition waiver and are enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits either during the spring prior to or the fall term immediately after the summer. Enrollment in summer credits is not required, but should reflect the work performed (i.e., if the student is collecting data toward their thesis/dissertation, enrollment in appropriate credits should reflect the effort).