

NSHE GRANTS-IN-AID: SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Given the expansiveness of the proposed revisions to the Board's policies governing grants-in-aid, this document, in lieu of the traditional briefing paper, details the substantive provisions of the policy proposal (attached).

Impetus/Background

From January 2006 through April 2008, the NSHE Internal Audit Department audited the professional employee and graduate research assistant grant-in-aid functions at all NSHE institutions, including DRI, System Administration and System Computing Services. Through the course of the audits, the Audit Committee in adopting the reports recommended that the provisions of Board policy in Title 4, Chapter 18, be revised to reflect "best practices" and current institutional protocols where appropriate. A number of the Board's policies on grants-in-aid date back to the 1960s. Subsequent revisions to the policy have in some cases resulted in provisions that are complex and no longer practical in today's business environment. Some of the provisions are obsolete or required clarification.

Summary of Substantive Revisions

Staff recommends revisions to the policy intended to clarify and update the current provisions. While the audits focused on the professional staff grant-in-aid practices, the proposed revisions impact the student grant-in-aid provisions as well. Given that the current policies have been intermingled over time, the revised provisions separate the appropriate policies and in general "clean up" the existing language. Following is a summary of the substantive changes to the policy:

Professional Grants-in Aid (Title 4, Chapter 3)

- 1) Removing the grant-in-aid provisions governing professional staff from Chapter 18 (Financial Aid) and inserting them in Chapter 3 (Professional Staff). It is current practice that professional grants-in-aid are not administered out of the institutional Financial Aid Office, but rather are administered separately in Human Resources.
- 2) Clarifying that for professional employees courses taken at the professional schools are eligible for a grant-in-aid, which is current practice.
- 3) Pursuant to Senate Bill 283 (Chapter 393, *Statutes of Nevada 2009*), providing that domestic partners and their financially dependent children are eligible for the same grant-in-aid benefits provided to spouses and dependent children as long as the domestic partnership is registered with the Office of the Nevada Secretary of State.
- 4) Limiting grant-in-aid for retired professional staff to those who are age 55 or over with a minimum of 20 years of NSHE service. Current policy provides that in addition to these individuals, those who are age 60 or over with a minimum of 10 years of NSHE service are eligible for grants-in-aid. In order to encourage long-term service and to limit grants-in-aid, the provision has been limited. **Professional staff members who are age 60 years or over with a minimum of 10 years of service and are currently receiving a grant-in-aid benefit shall be grandfathered in under the prior provision, as long as they remain continuously enrolled.**

- 5) The provision governing the definition of “financially dependent children” is revised to provide that the child must be claimed as an exemption for federal income tax purpose under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 152) to be consistent with the definition used in other sections of the Board *Handbook*.
- 6) Establishing a date of submission for grant-in-aid requests by professional staff at the institutions’ discretion. The current policy is silent on this matter. The proposal provides that institutions may establish a submission date for professional grant-in-aid requests.
- 7) Clarifying that System Administration or an institution awarding a grant-in-aid must notify the employee of the appropriate taxable benefit pursuant to the System’s federal Educational Assistance Plan.
- 8) Current policy provides for TMCC only, the authority to extend grant-in-aid benefits to a temporary part-time faculty member’s spouse or financially dependent child. For all other institutions, the current policy limits the benefit to the temporary part-time faculty member only. This benefit has not been widely utilized at TMCC, and therefore it is recommended that the provision be eliminated to align with the other institutions. TMCC administration is aware of the deletion and believes it is appropriate.

Graduate Research Assistants (*Title 4, Chapter 5*)

No substantive revisions are proposed to the Title 4, Chapter 5 provisions governing grants-in-aid for graduate research assistants.

Student Grants-in-Aid (*Title 4, Chapter 18*)

- 1) Clarifying that courses associated with the professional schools are not eligible for a student grant-in-aid as is the current practice. (Note, professional staff receive an exception to this in the Chapter 3 revisions.)
- 2) Clarifying that all students with a grant-in-aid must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Current policy provides a GPA provision for certain student categories only. Staff recommends a consistent policy for all students.
- 3) Clarifying in accordance with current institutional practice that a student grant-in-aid may be for a flat dollar amount not to exceed the portion of the registration fee allocated in support of the state-supported operating budget.

Pros and Cons of the Proposal

In the process of development, this policy proposal has been vetted through the Business Officers, Student Affairs Council, the Human Resource Directors, and the Audit Department of System Administration. Suggested revisions from those groups have been appropriately incorporated.

In general, this proposal:

- Aligns Board policy with current practice;
- Eliminates obsolete provisions;
- Separates the professional grant-in-aid provisions from the student provisions as they are currently administered separately; and
- Clarifies for audit purposes the provisions governing NSHE grants-in-aid.

Expanding Professional and Classified Benefits

During the process of developing these revisions, staff considered expanding the current grant-in-aid benefit for professional staff, their spouse and dependent children. Under the current (and revised) policy, the grant-in-aid for professional staff does not cover the full amount of the registration fee for state-supported courses. Rather, it covers that portion of the fee that is allocated to support the state-supported operating budget which is approximately 65 percent at the universities (undergraduate), 60 percent at the state college and upper division at community colleges, and 75 percent at the lower division community colleges. Given the fiscal challenges facing the state and NSHE institutions, it did not seem possible at this time to extend the benefit to cover 100 percent of the fee. However, at a future date when the financial situation improves, exploration of the option of expanding the benefit to cover the full cost and expanding the benefits for classified employees can be reviewed again.

Fiscal Impact

None.

Effective Date

The proposed revisions will be effective in January 2010.

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 3, *new* SECTIONS 10-12
Grants-in-Aid for Professional Staff and Dependents

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

INSERT THE FOLLOWING NEW SECTIONS FOLLOWING SECTION 9:

Section 10. Grants-in-Aid – General Administration

Unless otherwise provided, the following provisions govern the administration of NSHE grants-in-aid for professional staff, including their spouse or registered domestic partner and financially dependent children as authorized by this Chapter.

- 1. The registration fees associated with the William S. Boyd School of Law, the University of Nevada School of Medicine, and the pre-doctoral program at the UNLV School of Dental Medicine are eligible for a grant-in-aid.*
- 2. Except as otherwise provided, persons who receive a grant-in-aid pursuant to this Chapter and enroll in a state-supported course shall receive a grant-in-aid equivalent in value to that portion of the per credit registration fee allocated to the state supported operating budget (or General Fund). The capital improvement fee and the general improvement fee shall be waived at all institutions as part of the grant-in-aid, except at the universities where the capital improvement fee only will be waived.*
- 3. Laboratory and other special course fees, including but not limited to the technology fee, will not be included in a grant-in-aid award.*
- 4. Grants-in-aid may be awarded fall, spring and summer semesters only.*
- 5. Summer session grants-in-aid for state-supported courses shall be equivalent in value to the per credit grant-in-aid allowed in the prior spring semester.*
- 6. Self-supporting courses, including community service and continuing education courses, may be eligible for a grant-in-aid equivalent in value to the total registration fee charged or the amount of the per credit registration fee that would be allocated to the state-supported operating budget (for state-supported courses), whichever is less. It is the responsibility of each institution to designate any self-supporting programs that are not grant-in-aid eligible.*

Section 11. Grants-in-Aid –Professional Staff and Dependents

- 1. The following classifications for professional staff are eligible for grants-in-aid as defined by this section:*
 - a. Professional staff members who are on an “A” or “B” contract for at least .50 FTE employment;*
 - b. Professional staff members who are on sabbatical or leave of absence without pay;*
 - c. Emeritus faculty;*
 - d. Adjunct and clinical faculty; and*
 - e. Retired professional staff members who are age 55 or over and have at least 20 years of NSHE service.*

2. *Except for adjunct and clinical faculty, the spouse and financially dependent child for all categories of professional staff defined in subsection 1 are eligible for grants-in-aid as defined by this section.*
3. *The domestic partner and their financially dependent children are eligible for grants-in-aid for all categories of professional staff defined in subsection 1 if the domestic partnership is registered with the Office of the Nevada Secretary of State.*
4. *For the purposes of this Chapter, "financially dependent child" shall mean a natural, adopted or step child of a professional staff member who is not financially independent, is claimed as an exemption for federal income tax purposes under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 152), and has not attained the age of 24. The professional staff member must attest to a dependency each time a grant-in-aid is issued. Institutions awarding a grant-in-aid to a spouse or financially dependent child may at any time request proof of dependent eligibility for verification purposes.*
5. *Institutions may establish a deadline for the submission of a grant-in-aid request.*
6. *For qualified dependent children who have served on active duty in the United States Armed Forces, the age limitation set forth in subsection 3 shall be extended for the period of such active service, but not to exceed six years.*
7. *Except as otherwise provided, professional staff members as defined in this section are restricted to no more than six credits in the fall and spring semesters. Professional staff members employed under an "A" contract shall be limited to three credits for a grant-in-aid across all summer semesters. Professional staff members employed under a "B" contract are not limited in the number of credits that are grant-in-aid eligible during all summer sessions. There shall be no restriction on the number of credit hours a spouse or financially dependent child may register for under this policy. Upon approval by the institutional President, community college faculty while on sabbatical may take additional courses under this policy if for professional development.*
8. *A professional staff member, spouse or financially dependent child enrolled in a course under a grant-in-aid at the time the professional staff member's contract terminates shall be permitted to finish the course under the grant-in-aid.*
9. *System Administration or an institution awarding the grant-in-aid to an employee or his spouse or financially dependent child must notify the employee and the Internal Revenue Service of the appropriate taxable benefit pursuant to the NSHE's Section 127 Educational Assistance Plan.*
10. *Widows or widowers and financially dependent children of deceased former professional staff members, or professional staff members who have become totally and permanently disabled, their spouses and financially dependent children may request a grant-in-aid on the form prescribed by the Chancellor. Such individuals are eligible for a grant-in-aid under the following conditions:*
 - a. *The professional staff member shall have held a valid unfulfilled "A" or "B" contract or have been granted sabbatical leave at the time of death or such disability.*
 - b. *The spouse, widow, widower or disabled former professional staff member may receive a grant-in-aid for no more than eight semesters.*

- 11. *Grant-in-aid requests by professional staff must be approved by their supervisor. Grant-in-aid requests on behalf of a spouse or financially dependent child do not require supervisor approval, but each institution and the System Office shall designate a central office to be responsible for reviewing and processing the requests. All requests for grant-in-aid by professional staff members must be made on a form prescribed by the Chancellor. Institutions may utilize an on-line grant-in-aid form if the content of the on-line form includes the same information that is required on the form prescribed by the Chancellor.***

Section 12. *Grants-in-Aid – Temporary Part-time Faculty*

- 1. *Temporary part-time faculty (LOAs), as defined in Title 4, Chapter 3, may receive a grant-in-aid for courses at the institution in which they are employed, not to exceed the number of credit hours the part-time faculty member is currently teaching, and not to exceed six credit hours.***
 - a. *The grant-in-aid is applicable only to courses taken during the Fall and Spring regular semesters and must be taken at the college or university where employed.***
 - b. *The grant-in-aid based on credit hours may be utilized during the semester in which the temporary part-time faculty member is teaching or in the semester immediately following.***
 - c. *Temporary part-time faculty employed by continuing education and community service units are not eligible for a grant-in-aid or waiver.***
 - d. *Non-resident temporary part-time faculty receiving a grant-in-aid shall be deemed residents for tuition purposes.***
- 2. *Temporary part-time faculty who do not teach, the course equivalency for their services shall be determined by multiplying six credit hours by the faculty member's FTE. The credits hours will be rounded up to determine the maximum number of credit hours covered by a grant-in-aid.***

RENUMBER SECTIONS 10 THROUGH 41 AS SECTIONS 13 THROUGH 44

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 5, SECTION 4
Grants-in-Aid for Graduate Assistants

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 4. Grants-in-Aid for Tuition and Fees

1. Graduate assistants may receive a grant-in-aid for the payment of tuition and a specified portion of the registration fees proportional to the semester salary.
2. Provision of a grant-in-aid does not automatically entitle the recipient to other [~~University~~] *institutional* privileges, such as faculty status or Nevada resident status.
3. A graduate assistant who is under contract for the academic year and who remains enrolled in a degree program may receive a grant-in-aid for the payment of a specified portion of the registration fees for the summer session immediately prior to or immediately following the effective date of his contract. In the event a contract has not been signed, a written statement from the department chairman that an appointment has been offered will constitute sufficient evidence to obtain a grant-in-aid for the summer session.
4. A graduate assistant at the universities or state college who, in order to complete degree requirements by September has to register for credits of thesis in the summer session, may receive a grant-in-aid for the payment of a specified portion of the registration fees for that summer session as a condition of employment during the previous academic year.
5. As a condition of employment, graduate assistants may receive a waiver of the capital improvement fee proportional to the semester salary received.

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 18, SECTIONS 1-10
Grants-in-Aid, General Students

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

DELETE SECTIONS 1 THRU 10 IN WHOLE.

INSERT THE FOLLOWING NEW SECTIONS:

Section 1. Grants-in-Aid – General Administration

Unless otherwise provided, the following provisions governing the administration of NSHE student grants-in-aid are applicable to all grant-in-aid categories defined by this Chapter.

- 1. The registration fees associated with the William S. Boyd School of Law, the University of Nevada School of Medicine, and the UNLV School of Dental Medicine are not eligible for a student grant-in-aid.*
- 2. Laboratory and other special course fees will not be included in a student grant-in-aid award.*
- 3. Except as otherwise provided, persons who receive a student grant-in-aid pursuant to this Chapter and enroll in a state-supported course shall receive a grant-in-aid not to exceed in value that portion of the per credit registration fee allocated to the state supported operating budget (or General Fund).
 - a. Student grants-in-aid for state-supported courses may be awarded for fall, spring and summer semesters only.*
 - b. Summer session grants-in-aid for state-supported courses shall be equivalent in value to the per credit grant-in-aid allowed in the prior spring semester.*
 - c. Self-supporting courses, including community service and continuing education courses, may be eligible for a grant-in-aid equivalent in value to the total registration fee charged or the amount of the per credit registration fee that would be allocated to the state-supported operating budget (for state-supported courses), whichever is less.*
 - d. Grants-in-aid provided to student athletes and student body officers designated by the President enrolled in state-support courses shall include a waiver of the capital improvement fee and general improvement fee at the state college and community colleges; and the capital improvement fee only at the universities.*
 - e. Student grant-in-aid recipients must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0.**

Section 2. Grants-in-Aid, Resident and Nonresident Awards

- 1. *Annually, the Board of Regents shall allocate the permissible number of grants-in-aid that may be awarded by each NSHE institution for resident and nonresident undergraduate and graduate students, excluding those for professional staff and their dependents, to the extent that funding is available.***
- 2. In-State Awards. *Student grants-in-aid may be provided to undergraduate and graduate students who are residents of Nevada not to exceed a number equal to three percent of the total matriculated enrollment of students for the preceding fall semester. The allocation of awards for resident students includes, but is not limited to, the following specific categories:***
 - a. *Members of federally recognized Native American tribes residing on tribal lands located wholly or partially within the boundaries of Nevada;***
 - b. *The financially dependent child or spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States killed in the line of duty while permanently stationed in Nevada, excluding the child or spouse of a member of the Nevada National Guard killed while performing duties pursuant to the fee waiver established for such in Title 4, Chapter 17.***
 - c. *Military personnel assigned to ROTC detachments within the NSHE and their spouses and financially dependent children are eligible for the duration of such assignment.***
- 3. Out-of-State Awards. *Student grants-in-aid may be provided to nonresident undergraduate and graduate students, including foreign students, not to exceed a number equal to three percent of the total matriculated enrollment of students for the preceding fall semester for the payment of nonresident tuition as authorized by Nevada Revised Statutes 396.540.***

RENUMBER SECTIONS 11 THROUGH 20 AS SECTIONS 3 THROUGH 12



NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Grant-in-Aid Request Form

for professional staff members, their spouses and financially dependent children

Employee Name: _____ Department: _____

Employee ID Number: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Check the applicable box:
[] Current Staff [] Emeritus/Retired Staff [] Spouse
[] Dependent of Staff [] Dependent of Deceased Staff [] Domestic Partner

Year: 20____ Semester: [] Fall [] Spring [] Summer -- mini, 1st, 2nd, 3rd (circle applicable Summer term)

Employee Grant-in-Aid – complete the following:

Institution Attending: [] UNR [] UNLV [] NSC [] CSN [] GBC [] TMCC [] WNC

Number of credits: _____ [] undergraduate credits _____ [] graduate credits
(maximum of 6 credits per semester are grant-in-aid eligible for professional employees)

Dependent/Spouse/Domestic Partner Grant-in-Aid – complete the following:

Name of Dependent: _____

Institution Attending: [] UNR [] UNLV [] NSC [] CSN [] GBC [] TMCC [] WNC

Relationship to current or former employee:

[] Spouse [] Domestic Partner [] Financially Dependent Child* [] Widow/Widower

*Dependency Declaration - initial the applicable statement.

I attest that the above-named dependent student meets the Board of Regents' definition of "financially dependent child" as a natural, adopted or step child of a professional staff member or his or her domestic partner who is not financially independent, is claimed as an exemption for federal income tax purposes under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 152), and has not attained the age of 24. Dependent child's date of birth: ___/___/___

If over the age of 24, has served on active duty in the United States Armed Forces

I attest that the above-named student is my spouse or domestic partner.

I understand that:

- 1. The value of this fee waiver, if for a dependent, spouse or domestic partner graduate-level course, may represent taxable income to me and, as such, will be included on my form W-2;
2. No deductions for federal income tax will occur as a result of this fee waiver, but I may make adjustments to federal income tax withholding by completing and submitting a new form W-4 to the Payroll Department;
3. If I am subject to federal withholding and/or Medicare tax, the deduction(s) will be withheld based on the value of this fee waiver (subject to maximum coverage limitations).

I declare, under penalty of perjury under the law of the State of Nevada, that the foregoing is true and correct; that I have read all the qualifications above, as well as the excerpts from the Board of Regents' Handbook that are attached to this form; and that I am entitled to request Grant-in-aid for the above shown applicant(s). I understand that false representations in this certification may subject me to civil liability, disciplinary action up to and including termination, and referral to the Nevada Attorney General for criminal investigation. I also understand and agree that the Nevada System of Higher Education may request proof of dependent eligibility at any time.

Employee signature _____ Date _____

HR (or other designated office) review of employment _____ Date _____

Reviewed and approved by immediate supervisor _____ Date _____

Entered for payment _____ Date _____