Graduate Students: Enrollment and Employment

May 5, 2015
What problem are we trying to solve?

• Consistency of charging
  – We promise the federal government that
    “Expenses for similar purposes [will] be treated the same way under like circumstances.”

• GA mechanism was being used as a way of avoiding tuition charges.
  – Loss of tuition revenue to the Institute.
  – Estimates last summer ranged from $500,000 to $1,000,000 in lost tuition revenue.

• Our institutional integrity is at stake.
What steps did we take?

• Put enrollment and employment policies together last summer
  – Communicated through the Deans.
  – Lots of questions arose with regard to traditional summer hiring.
  – Briefed the Business Partners in July
• Appointed Advisory Group on Graduate Enrollment and Employment
  – People from each college, mix of faculty and business officers
• Consulted with the Associate Deans
  – Wanted clear language, because they anticipated faculty creativity in interpretation
• Advisory Group worked on clarified wording
  – Their wording has now been posted in the Policy Library.
    • http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/graduate-student-enrollment-and-employment
Basic principles

• In order to be employed in a graduate student employment category, graduate students must be registered.
  – Commonsense, backed up by IRS definitions
  – Students are acquiring relevant skills and knowledge in their jobs.
• GT must use GRA and GTA appointments “consistently.”
• Hiring types:
  – GRA or GTA: full time student, 13-20 hours per week, tuition waiver provided
  – GA: administrative work, part-time student, or small jobs (<25% effort)
• No difference between terms
  – Summer is just like any other term.
• Limited exceptions can be granted.
GRAs/ GTAs

- A graduate student working 13-20 hours per week doing research or teaching/classroom work must be hired as a GRA or GTA.
- Once students start working as GRAs on a project, they must continue in that status through their involvement in the project.
- Reason: consistency of charging principle
- Things that come with this:
  - Student must register as full time.
  - School must provide tuition waiver.
  - Grant will be charged for tuition.
  - Summer is just like any other term.
Graduate Assistant (GA)

- GT has determined that this hiring mechanism will not carry a tuition waiver.
- But since it is a student hiring category, under the principles articulated above, the student must be registered.
- If the student is not registered at all, another hiring mechanism should be used.
  - We are directing programs to Tech Temp status.
  - Are there other avenues that you can think of?
- The VP may approve exceptions. Send your requests to vpgefd@gatech.edu.
Full time work in the summer

• Once a student starts to work for GT full-time, their education is incidental to their employment rather than the other way around, according to IRS definitions (Proc Rev 2005-11).

• They should therefore be hired through the same route as any other temporary full-time employee, not through a student hiring mechanism.

• Please note that
  – Last year as of May 17, no Graduate Assistants had been hired full time for the summer.
  – GRA and GTA funding mechanisms should never be used for full-time hires.
Information sources

• The Policy

• On the Grad Studies web site after this meeting:
  – These slides
  – Summary table
  – FAQs
  – Link: http://www.grad.gatech.edu/fs-student-employment

• Send questions or requests for exceptions to vpgefd@gatech.edu.
  – Include student name, GTID, and the specific reason for the exception.
QUESTIONS?