



January 21, 2020

RE: Position Statement for the Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) Program

From: Alicia L Bertone, DVM, PhD
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ENGIE-Axium Endowed Dean's Chair

Background about MTFA: The Graduate School's Matching Tuition and Fee Award program provides fee authorizations for graduate students who receive a competitive stipend from a funding agency that does not provide funds to cover tuition and fees. MTFA requests are made via the on-line Fellowship System, reviewed by the Associate Dean and approved by the Graduate School. Requests are received prior to grant submission, therefore, grants that are not funded may result in residual funds in the MTFA.

The Graduate School receives central annual funds to support graduate students in the form of Fellowships (College Allocated and Competitive) and Matching Tuition and Fees Awards (MTFA). The Graduate School had begun a practice of sporadically providing cost share on standard external research grants (R01, NSF) using MTFA funding and cash reserves. This practice did not meet the criteria established for the MTFA funds and cash reserves have been allocated out in the form of Fellowships. The Graduate School has not had, and does not have, funds earmarked for a cost share program. The Graduate School does support the use of our College Allocated Fellowships (CAFs) as University Matching Funds on grants. The Graduate School recommends that the substantial graduate student support provided to the colleges as CAFs be leveraged on research grants requiring cost share in order to enhance funding and demonstrate the support by the university (Graduate School) for graduate student initiatives.

Actions: In collaboration with Vice President Morley Stone, the Graduate School embarked on a path to establish best practices for the spending of MTFA residual funds each year. The Graduate School team met with Deans and Fiscal Officers from colleges, including those who have requested MTFA support for cost share on research grants, to understand challenges and receive suggestions.

Agreement was established that the original intent of the MTFA program is still supported and confirmed as it leverages our external funding to support graduate students and expand research. External research grants that qualify for the program are those that would not be able to support graduate students without the MTFA. The Graduate School plans to more broadly market the MTFA because some colleges did not know the program existed. Our goal would be to spend all allotted annual funds through the MTFA.

Going forward, residual funds that may remain in the MTFA will be awarded at the discretion of the Associate Dean and Dean of the Graduate School for proposals that align with the Graduate School's initiatives as outlined below. These requests should come directly to the Associate Dean and/or Dean and proposals may then be invited for submission by petition.

GRADUATE SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

Each fiscal year, the Graduate School may award out residual MTFA funds as tuition and fee match, as deemed appropriate, based on the following guidelines:

1. Consideration only for proposals that have been invited after discussion with the Dean and/or Associate Dean for consideration (see below for priorities of the Graduate School). After this discussion, on

request, the college administration or PI will need to provide all the necessary information (same as that required in the Fellowship System for MTFA), a customized justification summary from the College Dean or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, and a statement of priority for funding. It will not be sufficient for this letter to be similar for all proposals and rank all of them as the highest priority. Not all proposals can be funded. Decisions will be made by the Graduate School Dean and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

2. Prioritization by the Graduate School will be given to the following requests:
 - a. External Training Grants, or equivalent, that are designed and intended to support graduate students, primarily doctoral students, as the major component of the budget and do not cover stipend, tuition or fees.
 - b. External Grants that provide funding to enhance the diversity of the Ohio State graduate student body and increase the numbers of students that represent diversification of that program, i.e. women in STEM, URM's in most programs, first generation in most programs etc.
 - c. External Grants that support interdisciplinary graduate, primarily doctoral student efforts, such as interdisciplinary graduate programs, educationally linked professional development or experiential capstone experiences as part of the CPT (curricular practical training) course initiatives.
 - d. External Grants that align with larger or other university initiatives that increase the quality, or quantity, of graduate students, e.g. ODI's diversity recruitment fairs, bridge funding, early offer initiatives, to name a few.
 - e. Colleges that allocate either new funding or their CAFs to recruitment efforts that align with the items listed above may receive partial MTFA funding to supplement college funds.

In summary, the Graduate School MTFA allocations will prioritize and incentivize external grant applications that support and leverage a greater quality, quantity, or diversity of graduate student as well as interdisciplinary graduate programs and the practices of early offer recruitment to increase the yield of the highest quality and diversity of graduate students.

Requests less likely to be funded would include:

1. Requests for MTFA on grants already funded.
2. Cost share on external grants where tuition and fees are allowable costs and are budgeted to support the expected number of graduate students for a research grant of that size, currently ~ 1 Graduate Student per \$250,000 in total grant budget. Agencies such as NSF and NIH expect graduate students should be part of research grant budgets and will pay for them, both stipend and tuition and fees.
3. Summer programs geared toward recruitment or any other programs that are primarily designed to fund undergraduate students or transition graduate students to faculty positions. The primary goal of the Graduate School funds is to provide direct support in the form of tuition and fees to PhD graduate students at Ohio State.

Sincerely,



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