

Questions from the Changes to Student Award Payments webinar

All questions were answered during the webinar until Brenda Vawter's highlighted **green**.

The question highlighted **yellow** contains a corrected answer.

The question in **blue** was a question that needed to be followed up on.

From Valerie Bernhardt to All Panelists: 01:11 PM

But our awards (travel scholarships, chancellor's awards) are NOT a lottery?

The lottery was only an example. No, the awards you mention are not a lottery.

From Dani Burns to All Panelists: 01:11 PM

Can you clarify the difference between expense reimbursement - when is it financial aid, when is it not?

If a reimbursement relates to their academic study, it is financial aid.

@Dani - only reimbursement that is for University benefit or University employment would not be financial aid. For example, if the student is being reimbursed for gas because they attended a recruiting event for their academic department. That reimbursement would be considered for University benefit and not count as financial aid. However, if you are reimbursing a student for gas to travel to do research to complete their dissertation or thesis, that payment would be considered financial aid.

From Amanda Savas to All Panelists: 01:14 PM

Student Affairs processes emergency aid payments on vouchers, but mostly through Zelle via request to Cash Management. We use an award account code per Accounting Services. Being able to use Zelle is critical to getting our students financial support when they are experiencing an emergency or crisis, which has increased due to the pandemic. Is this considered financial aid? Can you also tell me if it is the policy of the University to apply awards to outstanding bills at the before disbursing the balance of the award to the student? Finally, Student Affairs does not have access to GradStar, so an exception or other workaround may need to be identified for this situation or method of payment. Perhaps a separate meeting with Student Affairs is needed to further explain this situation and others. Thank you!

What about awards for students taking a gap year and deferred their enrollment? During the year they receive awards to support their planned gap year experience, and they are not enrolled during this period. If they are not enrolled, I wouldn't think this could go through GradStar, but would need to continue to be vouched. Another potential exception out of Student Affairs, for which a separate meeting might be best.

@Amanda- Yes, emergency aid payments are considered financial aid and should be reported in GradStar beginning August 2021. In general, most awards are applied to the student's tuition/fee bill. If the student has a 0 balance, the Cashier's Office will issue the student a refund for the award payment. You can contact gradStar@unc.edu to get access to GradStar.

@Amanda – We will meet with Audra Slavin this afternoon to specifically discuss SA student payments. We will have more guidance later that is specific to Student Affairs.

From Julie Theriault (she/her/hers) to All Panelists: 01:17 PM

What is the best way to verify if a student will end up being over awarded based on funding? It is simply to contact Aesha and find out if they have maxed out their loans?

@Julie, yes, the student can contact our office at aidinfo@unc.edu for assistance in determining if they will be over awarded.

From Shayna Flint to All Panelists: 01:20 PM

Hi all, I am here representing my department and they provided me with a few questions to bring back answers to. Apologies in advance for the numerous queries.... These might also be answered during the presentation....

1. How will overpayments due to a student leaving early be recouped? Will grants be charged for payments that are found to be unrecoverable?

The department will remove the award from GradStar, which will credit the grant source, and the student will owe funds back to the university. The University Cashier's Office will collect funds owed to the university but would also appreciate assistance from the department with getting in touch with the student.

2. Does these mean training grants will be classified as Non-service stipends?

Yes, in general, training grants are non-service, however, the "non-service" award type will no longer exist, instead, an award type called "training grant stipend" will be the option to choose to enter this type of payment.

3. Are undergraduate students included in this change? Will they continue on voucher or use GradStar? We have 1 grant (NSF supplement) that specifically requires the student payments be made by stipend, not payroll.

Yes, undergraduates are included. If the award is non-service, GradStar is the system to pay the amount to the student.

4. Will the system be able to allow for more than one chartfield string per student? NIH T-15 Students get reappointed mid-semester and a new CFS is started. For example, in August, a student will have part of their August stipend paid by one CFS and part of the August stipend paid on a 2nd CFS.

Yes, currently, that is possible, and it will be in the future. however, the CFS has to be unique.

5. Will GradStar apply FICA (social security/Medicare taxes) to the payments or will they payments be stipend only? At least one of our grants (NIH T-15) does not allow for FICA in addition to the stipend. (Thanks Tammy)

No, FICA will not be applied to payments in GradStar.

6. Are there any anticipated exceptions to the new process.

No, but if you have a specific scenario, please reach out to Beverly or Aesha for assistance.

From Terri Gault to All Panelists: 01:23 PM

How do the grant budget year start and end dates impact how much of the stipend can be paid out through GradStar in any given semester?

You can decide the amount you want to pay in any given semester. You will need to look at the start/end dates of the grant and make your decision based on those dates and the semester dates. Your school may want to determine a standard operating procedure for training grant payments.

From Valerie Bernhardt to Everyone: 01:24 PM

Need more info on "what qualifies as a training grant"?

A **training grant** is an agreement that provides a coordinated training program for students, postdoctoral researchers, staff, teachers and/or faculty who are selected by the institution to be a part of the training program. Payments provided to trainees from training grants are intended to defray living and/or training related expenses while the trainee participates in the training program. An example of a training grant can be found [here](#).

From Meryl Kanfer to All Panelists: 01:25 PM

I know what was required info we needed from students when paid through accounts payable/voucher. What info will be needed for Grad Star?

You need the student's PID, the chartfield string, and the payment amount. You need to know the general funding situation of the student, for example, whether you should expect to see an HR stipend on the GradStar Maintenance page for a student's teaching or research assistantship. It is helpful to know these details before you start doing the data entry. You will not need to set the student up as a vendor, like you did in accounts payable.

From Lori Harris to All Panelists: 01:25 PM

If they're paid just once per semester, when in the semester will it be?

@Lori - aid is disbursed once per semester on the first day of classes each semester.

From Meryl Kanfer to All Panelists: 01:25 PM

Also, is it possible to be paid quarterly (twice/semester)

GradStar allows more than one payment per semester, however, the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid needs to know in advance how much funding the department is providing to a student to accurately calculate federal aid packages. If you do a payment later in the semester, the aid package may be adjusted. In addition, for the student to qualify for in-state tuition, remission, or fee awards, the student needs to the minimum stipend amount, so if the payments are split, that may not be possible.

From Valerie Bernhardt to Everyone: 01:26 PM

if a student is going to Israel on the Huqoq dig, is that a training grant? If we provide a student with \$500 to support them studying abroad, is that a training grant? Both instances are situations where the student's plans involve expenses higher than the normal amount assumed for student support.

No, a training grant is a specific sponsored project (administered through the Office of Sponsored Research). This example would be an example of funding provided to do research, which is financial aid.

From Kira Jones to Everyone: 01:26 PM

Can you send the direct link that's on this slide to the 1098 T form that's embedded on this slide?

Yes, here is the [link](#).

From Terri Gault to All Panelists: 01:28 PM

Some training grants and NRSA's have odd start and end dates. If the NRSA starts 11/1/xx, I think I can only pay two months' stipend in the Fall, six months' in the Spring, and then the final four months' in the summer? Student has to be enrolled in a course to receive a GradStar payment in summer?

Yes, the student has to be enrolled in a course to receive funding in the summer. There is an option of enrolling them in a non-credit placeholder if they are not planning to enroll in summer. Your SSM should be able to help you with this process.

From Victoria Morgan to All Panelists: 01:28 PM

Once the stipend is approved and goes to Cashier's Office, the Cashier's office will pay the stipend to the student via electronic deposit?

@Victoria. Yes, as long as the student is signed up for direct deposit

From Kira Jones to Everyone: 01:28 PM (FOLLOW UP ANSWER)

Or, if these slides could be shared, not just the recording, so we can access all the embedded links.

We will share the slides after the webinar. You can find the [webinar slides](#) on the Graduate School's website.

From Vicki Moore to All Panelists: 01:30 PM

How do you differentiate between tuition paid as a GRA/TA (i.e. compensation) and tuition paid as financial aid?

All tuition paid on behalf of the student is counted as financial aid.

From Victoria Morgan to All Panelists: 01:30 PM

Could Bus Mgrs and Student Services Mgrs be included on the invite to the Town Hall meeting?

Yes, we can invite these groups when the Town Hall is set up.

From Lena Hudock to Everyone: 01:32 PM

So All trainee travel will be going through GS instead of through the travel system?

Yes, that is correct.

From Meryl Kanfer to All Panelists: 01:32 PM

I didn't see a category for attendance at conferences

@Meryl - this will be classified as a Travel award type in GradStar

From Kira Jones to Everyone: 01:32 PM

Will these new descriptions be pulled into Gradhub so we can see the difference in funding when we look at students overall funding? GradHub is in ConnectCarolina and basically the graduate student services center

Yes, the new information will be on the Graduate Student Services SharePoint site.

From Julie Theriault (she/her/hers) to All Panelists: 01:34 PM

Does TR have to allocated to only state based funds, similar to the new Instate tuition budget?

No, TR can be allocated to students funded by any source, as long as the student meets the [eligibility requirements](#).

From Valerie Bernhardt to Everyone: 01:36 PM

Which department gets tapped for the instate budget? If I hire a student from another department, on my CFS, is the instate budget amount assessed to my department or to the other department? And if both departments are paying the student, does the instate amount get assessed on a prorated basis?

The instate tuition budget is allocated based on the academic program of the student. However, the budget of department user who enters the award will be charged. If you have split funded students on state funds that cross departments, The Graduate School can adjust budgets for those departments as needed. It will not be prorated to each department – one department will have to do the entry (I would suggest the academic unit).

From Valerie Bernhardt to Everyone: 01:37 PM (FOLLOW UP ANSWER)

I haven't seen any questions about university purchases of student plane tickets (CABS purchases)--is that going to be totally impossible?

For students who are traveling for university business, you will continue to use CABS and WebTravel until the time that students are moved into the new Concur travel system.

For students who are traveling for their own academic benefit, any funding provided by the department is financial aid and must be entered in GradStar.

From Ada to All Panelists: 01:38 PM

To make sure this is applicable to pre-doctoral students only, correct?

Yes.

From Valerie Bernhardt to Everyone: 01:40 PM

A lot of us are really concerned about putting travel into GradStar, because it basically removes all possibility of documenting receipts. (Even the grad school requires receipts after the fact for travel awards?)

We are working on detailed guidance about travel, and will get back to you as soon as possible.

From David Churchill to All Panelists: 01:41 PM

Can you provide some boiler plate language that we can use and give to students about there being potential financial aid implications for any award?

Yes, we can make that available in our library of resources for departments.

From Beth Mellott to All Panelists: 01:43 PM CORRECTED RESPONSE

Do non-monetary awards/prizes need to go through GradStar? For example, if the winner of a program gets a tangible item as a prize. Are there different policies based on the value of the item?

Correction to information mentioned in the webinar. Any cash amounts or the values of items (*non-monetary awards/prizes*) that are awarded to students because of their enrollment at the University or to cover education related expenses are considered financial aid. As such, the value of the non-monetary award/prize should be reported in GradStar. We will provide additional guidance regarding the appropriate award type to use in GradStar to report the value of non-monetary award/prizes.

From Brenda Vawter to All Panelists: 01:43 PM

Reimbursement for students' travel, are they to be done in GradStar instead of the Travel system?

For students who are traveling for university business, you will continue to use CABS and WebTravel until the time that students are moved into the new Concur travel system.

For students who are traveling for their own academic benefit, any funding provided by the department is financial aid and must be entered in GradStar.

From Ada to All Panelists: 01:43 PM

Training grants usually award stipend and travel allowance. Travel is a set amount but has not been paid out to the student before automatically. Currently we reimburse student based on the actual travel they have incurred - this may be more or less than what was originally allowed on the grant - we do have rebudgeting options.

We will provide some guidance on how to best handle training grant travel.

From David Churchill to All Panelists: 01:44 PM

To add to my above question, is there boiler plate language that can address the tax piece that Beverly just mentioned... will be reported on 1098-T, etc...

Yes, we can provide that language as well.

From Cara Marlow to All Panelists: 01:47 PM

Does this include all student travel? What about travel done on their faculty grants for their RA duties not a trainee. We normally pay registration fees on our Pcard and flights by CABS. Will the students be responsible for paying it themselves now?

You will need to pay the student and they will be responsible for making their own arrangements. We will have additional guidance on travel in the coming weeks.

How soon in August will the students be paid by grad star? Will they have to wait until all tuition and fees are paid before they get a deposit?

Aid is disbursed once per semester on the first day of classes each semester. For certain award types, the funding will apply to the outstanding charges, but other award types will be set up as refund only. We will provide that detail in training materials to come.

From Jennifer Parker to All Panelists: 01:47 PM

Because many different payment types will be processed through GradStar, will the system be open at all times?

We are considering this option and may try that in fall 2021 to see how it goes.

From Meryl Kanfer to All Panelists: 01:49 PM

Will department need to upload direct deposit info to GradStar?

No. Students will need to set up [direct deposit through the University Cashier](#).

From Ada to All Panelists: 01:51 PM

If the full stipend amount is paid how will health insurance be calculated?

There will be no changes in how insurance is calculated.

From Michael Jarstfer: 01:52 PM

Can we use zero credit course to avoid having GRAs on faculty grants pay FICA during the summer?

If the payment you intend to make from the grant is non-service in nature, then you can pay it in GradStar, and no FICA would be applied. However, if the payment is for service (compensation), then it must be paid in payroll and tax policy will apply.

From Valerie Bernhardt to Everyone: 01:57 PM

If I enter a payment as "student travel" or "internship" and add a comment that this is for something over and above the "cost of attendance", can I feel assured that payment won't cause the student to lose that same amount from their financial aid? (If they are going to a conference and I give them \$500, are they going to lose \$500 from financial aid?)

We are working out these details. Until we have a fully automated process, to be sure about the impacts to a student's aid, you (or the student) should contact the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid before entering the award.

From Iyana Alewine to All Panelists: 01:58 PM

We offer fellowships (that include a stipend, in addition to tuition, remission, health insurance and fee awards) funded by a federal training grant. Would the stipend for this fellowship be classified as a training grant stipend in the fall, or will it be classified as a fellowship stipend in GradStar?

If the funding is set up as a training grant through the Office of Sponsored Research, then yes, it would be a "training grant – stipend" award type.

From Meryl Kanfer to All Panelists: 02:00 PM

Just to clarify... we are used to entering direct deposit on behalf of students into voucher system. Now students will need to do this on their own?

Students will need to set up [direct deposit through the University Cashier](#). This direct deposit is separate from Payroll and Accounts Payable.