

# Instructions for Completing the Tuition Assistance Package

\*\*\* Please read all the instructions. \*\*\*

*Have questions? Call or visit Janine Dolinka –301-286-9951, Building 1, Room 144.*

There are **two** things to do:

## 1. Tuition Assistance Package

Be sure to read and **sign** the attached Tuition Assistance Agreement for Co-op Students Form (there are **2 places to sign**) and send it to the Student Programs Coordinator, Code 113. A new agreement is required each semester you request tuition assistance. If you don't sign the Tuition Assistance Agreement Form, your tuition assistance paperwork will not be processed!

## 2. Training Request(s)

Go to the SATERN system at <https://satern.nasa.gov>, enter your username (typically first initial, middle initial, lastname), and click LOGIN to begin. [If you are logging into SATERN for the **first time**, consult [https://saterninfo.nasa.gov/html/SATERN\\_UserInfo.pdf](https://saterninfo.nasa.gov/html/SATERN_UserInfo.pdf) for instructions on how to obtain a password.]

After successful login, SATERN will give you a 10-15 minute window to input your information. After this timeframe, SATERN will lock up even if you were typing the whole time. Be prepared prior to logging into SATERN.

A **separate request** must be filled out for **each course** you are requesting tuition assistance for. Remember, you may only request up to \$2,500 per semester. Once the form(s) are inputted, a phone call to your supervisor is recommended to alert him/her that you sent training forms for approval. All authorizations and approvals occur on-line.

**Block 19 in SATERN** is a comments field. You should note in Block 19 that you are an Undergrad Co-op or Graduate Co-op.

Once your request(s) has made it through all approvals, the SATERN system automatically sends you an email confirming your registration. You should log into SATERN to print your approved request(s). It is **your responsibility** to take (or fax) the approved request(s) (NF 1735) to your college/university.

Your college/university will then invoice the NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC) in order to get an official payment. The NSSC address is listed in the Billing Instructions section on the approved training requests.

Be aware that once the semester/quarter has concluded, the NSSC will be requesting a copy of a grade report or transcript for each course you were approved for tuition assistance. This could be a faxed copy of your report card or transcript, or you may attach a screenshot/PDF to an email.

## **Cooperative Education Tuition Assistance Program**

Tuition assistance may be offered to employees in the Cooperative Education (Co-op) Program. Such assistance must be for the expressed purpose of developing those knowledges, skills, and abilities which will best qualify them for prescribed positions and are directly related to future performance in assigned positions.

Consideration for tuition assistance is given without regard to gender, race, religion, color, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation or ability. Consideration for tuition assistance will not be given to employees training in any non-Government facility that has discriminated on the basis of gender, race, religion, color, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation or ability in the admission or in subsequent treatment of students.

Guidelines covering any selection for and payment of tuition assistance will be subject to provisions of or any revisions to the standards, regulations, policies, procedures, or any other guidelines of the Agency or the Office of Personnel Management.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

To qualify, students must:

1. meet the basic requirements of the undergraduate or graduate Co-op Program, including maintaining a 2.9 or higher grade point average;
2. be currently completing or have completed one Co-op work tour at GSFC; and
3. be performing at an acceptable level at work (if applicable, must have been rated "Meets or Exceeds Expectations" or better on the last performance evaluation.)

### **COVERED EXPENSES**

The Tuition Assistance Program provides for the payment of the following expenses:

Tuition up to \$2,500 per semester or \$1,625 per quarter, with a total cap of \$10,000 while in the Co-op program, to include registration and laboratory fees/services.

The GSFC will not fund the following:

1. Housing
2. Books
3. Supplies/Materials
4. Other fees not directly related to tuition and registration

## **SERVICE OBLIGATION**

All employees receiving tuition assistance will incur a service obligation with the GSFC beginning the first workday after the end of the training covered by the agreement. A service obligation requires that employees receiving tuition assistance work for the GSFC for a period equal to three times the amount of time spent in the GSFC funded training. Therefore, for students, the service obligation would be calculated by totaling the number of calendar days in a semester/quarter in which tuition was paid by GSFC and multiplying by three.

Service obligations will be reduced by the time spent in a work cycle while in the Co-op Program.

## **FAILURE TO FULFILL THE TUITION ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT**

An employee who fails to fulfill the Tuition Assistance Agreement will be required to repay GSFC a sum equal to the total amount or balance of training expenses. Requests for pro-rated repayment on an installment basis may be submitted for approval.

Any amounts due as a result of an employee's failure to meet the terms of the agreement, may be withheld from any monies owed to the employee by the Government (i.e., salary, lump sum leave credit, retirement credit, etc.) or may also be recovered by such other methods as are provided by law.

An employee whose service is terminated for unacceptable performance is subject to the repayment provisions under the Tuition Assistance Agreement. Furthermore, an employee who declines an offer of full-time employment is subject to repayment!

Continued service is subject to the staffing needs of the GSFC and the availability of funds. The Tuition Assistance Agreement in no way commits the GSFC to continue a Co-op's employment or to make an offer of permanent employment. If the GSFC does not make an offer of permanent employment, any balance due is not subject to the repayment provisions.

GSFC may waive the right to recover training expenses (in whole or part) if the Agency finds that:

1. an employee completes most, but not all, of the required period of service
2. an employee resigns because of illness or serious illness of an immediate family member, or
3. because of severe hardship, an employee financially is unable to make the required payments

A request for reconsideration or waiver must be submitted within 10 working days of the notification of the amount owed or within 10 days of separation. A detailed written justification for reconsideration/waivers must be provided to the Student Programs Office, Code 112.

## **Tuition Assistance Agreement for Cooperative Education (Co-op) Students**

The following agreement is voluntarily entered into by the undersigned (hereafter referred to as the student) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Goddard Space Flight Center (hereafter referred to as the GSFC). The “Cooperative Education Assistance Program” is incorporated by reference as part of this agreement.

1. The GSFC, when properly billed by the school, will pay the student’s tuition (up to \$2,500 per semester with a total cap of \$10,000), if so requested by the student. In return for such payment, the student agrees to:
  - a. Conform to the terms specified in the Cooperative Education Agreement between the school and the GSFC.
  - b. Accept any full-time position offered by the GSFC in a comparable field, no later than 120 days after receipt of a degree in an approved field. Such offers will be at appropriate levels depending upon job standards and the student’s qualifications.
  - c. Remain in the employment of the GSFC for a period at least equal to three times the total periods of training covered by tuition assistance provided by the GSFC. Such periods of obligation will commence on the first workday after the end of the training covered by the agreement. (Time in a leave without pay status will not count toward this obligation.)
  - d. Notify the Co-op Coordinator of any change in courses (re-schedule, course drops or additions, withdrawals, etc., prior to enactment.)
  
2. In addition, the following terms are mutually agreed upon:
  - a. If no position offer has been made by the GSFC prior to 120 days following the graduation, financial obligation to the GSFC is canceled.
  - b. Failure to accept a position offer from the GSFC within the specified period, leaving the Co-op program prior to graduation, changing the academic major to one not approved by the GSFC, or otherwise failing to meet the conditions of this agreement will require proportional repayment to the GSFC of tuition assistance based on the service obligation that has not been satisfied.
  - c. Voluntary separation from the Government prior to completion of the obligated service item (Paragraph.1.c) or involuntary separation for cause will require repayment to the GSFC. Liability for repayment will be no more than the percent of the tuition assistance that is proportional to the percent of service obligated that has not been completed.
  - d. If a student is terminated, not for cause, during the probationary period, the student’s financial obligation to the GSFC is canceled.

- e. If the student voluntarily transfers to another Federal Agency before completing the period of service and it is determined that the academic credentials are not required in the new position, repayment to the GSFC will be requested as set forth in paragraph 2.c.
  - f. The student understands that any amounts which may be due to the Government as a result of any failure on the student's part to meet the terms of this agreement may be withheld from any monies owed the student by the Government or may be recovered by such other methods as are provided by law.
3. An employee who fails to fulfill the Tuition Assistance Agreement will be required to repay to the GSFC a sum equal to the total amount or balance of training expenses. Request for repayment on an installation basis may be submitted for approval.

The Agency may waive the right to recover training expenses (in whole or in part) if the Agency finds that:

- a. an employee completes most, but not all, of the required period of service;
- b. an employee resigns because of illness or serious illness of an immediate family member, or
- c. because of severe hardship, an employee financially is unable to make the required payments.

A request for reconsideration or waiver must be submitted with 10 working days of the notification of the amount owed or within 10 days of separation. A detailed written justification for reconsideration/waivers must be provided to the Student Programs Office, Code 112.

I have reviewed and read the GSFC Tuition Assistance Agreement and fully understand the provisions of this document.

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(Student Signature)

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(Date)

## **Estimated Training Expenses (Exclusive of Salary) and Service Obligation Period**

Tuition Assistance Requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other Supported Fees \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g., lab fees, registration fees)

Employee's Organizational Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Timeframe:      Beginning Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ending Date \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Service Obligation Period: \_\_\_\_\_ days (Calendar days x 3)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Programs Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Official Use Only*  
Will have paid back service  
obligation for this semester by  
COB \_\_\_\_\_