

# TAXATION OF FACULTY/STAFF TUITION WAIVERS

A portion of, or the entire value of graduate level tuition waivers granted to faculty, staff, their spouses, and their dependents could be taxable and reportable income to employees. This policy does not apply to Graduate Teaching and Research Assistants. Graduate level waivers for employees and their spouses and dependents will be taxed according to the following Internal Revenue Service regulations:

## **Section 117(d) of the Internal Revenue Code**

This section of the Code applies to employees of educational institutions, their spouses, and dependents. It provides for non-taxable tuition remission for all course work below the graduate level.

## **Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code**

This section applies to employees, their spouses, and dependents for graduate level course work. It provides for a \$5,250 exclusion from taxable wages **for employees only**. It does not provide any tax relief for spouses and dependents receiving tuition remission after they have received a baccalaureate degree.

### **Procedure for Employees**

Tuition waivers granted to employees matriculating in graduate programs are subject to taxation when their annual (calendar year) waiver amount posted to University records exceeds \$5,250. The value of 500 and 600 level courses as well as 400 level courses identified by the Graduate School as being included in an individual's Program of Studies will be subject to taxation. Matriculating graduate students without a Program of Studies will be taxed on all 400 and above courses.

### **Procedure for Spouses and Dependents of Employees**

Tuition waivers granted to employees' spouses and dependents who have previously received a baccalaureate degree are taxable to employees based on the value of all waivers received in a calendar year.

### **Process**

Each November the University will provide a list of employees and the dollar value of taxable tuition waivers they, their spouses, and dependents received during the current calendar year to the State Payroll Office. The State will withhold Social Security (FICA) from employees' biweekly pay based upon the value of the taxable waivers. The value of taxable tuition waivers will also be reported on employees' W-2 Forms. Affected employees will receive a document from the Payroll Office identifying the value of tuition waivers that will be reported to the State approximately one month prior to the submission of the list to the State.

Official University Student Enrollment records must be used to determine the value of tuition waivers. The value of dropped courses will be based upon the University's refund policy (not the drop/add policy) <http://www.uri.edu/es/students/bill/billadirefundinfo.html>. Rhode Island residency status identified at the time of waiver approval will determine whether in-state or out-of-state amounts are posted to the system. It is in each employee's best interest, therefore, to abide by tuition validation rules as if they were paying customers, (drop courses on a timely basis and establish in-state residency status as appropriate.)

Questions on this issue should be directed to Jim Cacciola, Assistant Controller- Payroll at [cacc@uri.edu](mailto:cacc@uri.edu).