

2025-2026 Tuition Review Advisory Committee

Agenda

Thursday, October 9, 2025

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm

Zoom

1. Approval of minutes from previous meeting [Committee] 5 minutes
2. Review of feedback from Student Representatives [Carreno, Rawat, Din]
3. Final Campus Initiated Tuition Increase Recommendations & Recommended Percentages for Allowable Uses [Arden]
4. Wrap-up

2025-2026 Tuition Review Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 1, 2025

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Zoom

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - a. Minutes were approved as submitted.
2. Premium Tuition Requests
 - a. Provost Arden gave a brief overview of premium tuition reminding the committee that the funds go directly to the program itself and are not taxed by the college or administration currently.
 - b. **MS in Wide Bandgap Semiconductors** [Veena Misra/Don Brenner] 15 minutes, 5 minutes Q&A
 - i. Presenters: Dr. Veena Misra and Don Brenner (Electrical and Computer Engineering/Materials Science Engineering)
 - ii. Dr. Misra presented a proposal for premium tuition for a newly developed, 31-credit-hour M.S. in Wide Band Gap Semiconductors, a joint degree between the Electrical Engineering and Materials Science Engineering departments.
 - iii. Rationale and Need: The degree is designed to meet the significant workforce needs driven by the CHIPS Act and the current demand for semiconductor manufacturing and fabrication in the United States. The Semiconductor Industry Association estimates a need for 67,000 new technical jobs, with 26% requiring a Master's or PhD degree. NC State has a unique advantage, built on its history of semiconductor research (e.g., CLAWS hub, Power America).
 - iv. Degree Structure: It is a hybrid degree, offered 81% online with two in-person practicums. It is structured to be completed in three semesters (totaling \$7,200 in premium tuition).
 - v. Premium Tuition Amount: \$2,400 per semester for a full-time load, totaling \$7,200 for the degree.
 - vi. Use of Funds: Revenue will support teaching assistants (TAs) for practicum courses in the clean room, staff support, purchase of necessary software and experimental tools, and allocation for both need-based and merit-based financial aid.
 - vii. Return on Investment (ROI): The median starting salary for a master's graduate in this field is an estimated \$34,000 higher than a bachelor's degree holder. The \$7,200 premium tuition is projected to be paid back in approximately three months of employment.
 - viii. Comparative Analysis: The proposed tuition is competitive with other NC State premium programs and national peer institutions (UCLA, Purdue,

University of Texas at Austin). The degree is unique in its dedicated focus on Wide Band Gap Semiconductors.

- ix. Enrollment Projections: The program expects steady growth, projecting an annual revenue of \$139,000 by year five.
 - x. Implementation: The department is requesting approval for the premium tuition to be implemented for the Fall 2026 cohort.
- c. MS in Global One Health [Michael Reiskind] 15 minutes, 5 minutes Q&A
- i. Presenter: Dr. Michael Reiskind (Program Director)
 - ii. Dr. Reiskind presented a request for premium tuition for the new, two-year M.S. in Global One Health (MSGOH) program, which is housed in the Graduate School.
 - iii. Premium Tuition Amount: \$5,600 per year per student, totaling \$11,200 for the two-year degree.
 - iv. Rationale: The program addresses health issues holistically (integrating human, animal, ecosystem, and plant health) and is novel on the national landscape. Funds are necessary for program viability due to the challenges of being an interdisciplinary program housed in the Graduate School without a dedicated department budget.
 - v. Use of Funds: A significant portion (\$140,000 annually) will fund a faculty buyout program (approx. 1.25 FTE) to ensure the best teaching faculty are secured across campus departments. Funds also support student scholarships, research/internship experiences, and professional development.
 - vi. Discussion: The presenter confirmed the tuition is essential for quality, particularly securing faculty, and is not a major financial burden for students given the strong expected ROI. The program is building a network with government and private industry (e.g., BASF, Bayer) for internships and future job placements, viewing graduates as uniquely equipped to handle complex problems like zoonotic disease emergence.
- d. MS Cybersecurity [Isabella White] 15 minutes, 5 minutes Q&A
- i. Presenters: Isabella White and Dr. Lori Williams (Department of Computer Science)
 - ii. The presenters proposed premium tuition for the recently approved Master of Cybersecurity degree.
 - iii. Premium Tuition Amount: \$2,800 per semester for full-time students, resulting in a total premium tuition of \$8,400 for the degree. This aligns with the previous premium tuition rate of the core Computer Science Master's degree.
 - iv. Rationale and Need: The degree is needed to meet the demand in a field with projected 32% job growth (16,585 current openings in NC). The degree offers a broad range of topics and includes a required practicum course with industry sponsors.

- v. Strategic Use of Funds/Backdoor Prevention:
 - 1. Funds will support the increased instructional load of cross-listed courses in Computer Science (CSC) and Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE), requiring more TA/grader support.
 - 2. A key goal is to prevent "backdoor access": ensuring students do not enroll in the Cybersecurity program to take the same CSC/ECE core courses without paying the associated premium tuition, which would strain the resources of the partner departments.
 - 3. Funds will also support the DGP for more individualized student attention, fund events like the North Carolina Annual Cybersecurity Symposium, and provide career service enhancements specifically tailored to cybersecurity.
 - vi. ROI: With a median master's salary of \$110,000 (Computer Science data), the premium tuition cost would be recouped in three to four months of employment. The program is set for a hard launch in Fall 2026.
- e. MS Agricultural Business Management [Junjie Wu] 15 minutes, 5 minutes Q&A
- i. Presenter: Dr. Junjie Wu (Department Head of Agricultural Resource Economics)
 - ii. Dr. Wu presented a proposal for premium tuition to support the new Master's in Agribusiness Management program, which addresses a strong grassroots demand and has no equivalent program currently in North Carolina.
 - iii. Premium Tuition Amount: \$2,700 per semester (based on 9 credit hours at \$300/credit hour).
 - iv. Financial Projections: The program projects generating \$221,400 annually by year two, with an estimated enrollment of 45 students.
 - v. Use of Funds (Allocation):
 - 1. Student Advising and Support: A large portion will be used to hire a Program Manager to coordinate recruitment, advising, and one-on-one student support.
 - 2. Professional Development and Career Planning: Services organized by the department's Office of Student Mentoring to help students secure a job offer before graduation.
 - 3. In-Kind Teaching and Instruction: To cover the cost of reassigning the most qualified faculty from the undergraduate to the master's program.
 - vi. Need-Based Financial Assistance: To ensure the program remains financially accessible and affordable.
 - vii. ROI/Affordability: While specific master's salary data is unavailable, anecdotal evidence from the advisory board suggests graduates can easily earn over \$100,000, allowing them to recoup the premium tuition

within a few months. The proposed rate is modest compared to peer professional master's programs.

viii. Implementation: The program is scheduled to launch before 2026.

3. Discussion: TRAC's recommendation regarding Premium Tuition Request [Committee]
 - a. The committee discussed all four premium tuition proposals and voted on their approval, while also coordinating essential feedback to strengthen their rationale for higher-level review.
 - b. Key Feedback and Revisions for Presenters: Before the vote, the committee noted several necessary changes for the proposals to ensure a smooth approval process at the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors levels:
 - i. Financial Aid Language: Advise all presenters to remove the term "need-based financial aid" (and potentially merit-based) from their tuition allocation plans. System Office instructions prohibit using tuition increases for any form of financial aid. The programs should instead frame this support as "assistantships" or funding aligned with the GSSP (Graduate Student Support Plan) model, which requires a work requirement.
 - ii. Data Updates: Presenters were advised to update all comparative tuition data to the 2025-2026 academic year.
 - iii. M.S. in Agricultural Business Management (AgBM): The presenter must refine the Return on Investment (ROI) data, as the anecdotal evidence of a salary jump from \$50,000 to over \$100,000 was deemed unrealistic. Suggested to reach out to peer institutions (e.g., Texas Tech, Mississippi State) or use conservative data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (approx. 20% bump).
 - iv. M.S. in Cybersecurity: The program was advised to clarify the narrative for its allocation, specifically the 75% dedicated to "salaries and wages" (faculty, TAs, graders, staff). The committee felt this high percentage was not visibly beneficial for students and suggested better articulating how the funds enhance quality and support to justify the premium.
 - c. Final Vote
 - i. Despite the necessary revisions, the committee unanimously agreed that all four programs were justified and beneficial to the university.
 - ii. Motion to approve all four premium tuition requests was made by Frank Buckless and seconded by Shubham Rawat.
 - iii. The vote was unanimous for the approval of the premium tuition requests for:
 1. M.S. in Wide Band Gap Semiconductors
 2. M.S. in Global One Health
 3. M.S. in Cybersecurity
 4. M.S. in Agricultural Business Management

4. Preliminary testing of different tuition rate scenarios/discussion [Jennifer Coltrane and Committee]
 - a. The committee reviewed a spreadsheet, introduced as a starting point for the general tuition increase, with a model based on a 3% increase across the board for all categories (in-state undergraduate increase applies only to the incoming freshman class).
 - b. Committee members were asked to review and analyze the spreadsheet's various scenarios before the next and final meeting. The goal is to come prepared to make a final recommendation on the specific tuition increase percentages, keeping in mind that:
 - c. The out-of-state rate is nearly three times the in-state rate, meaning the same percentage increase yields a much higher dollar amount.
 - d. The final proposal should be as simple and straightforward as possible to avoid unnecessary complications and questions during the Board of Governors review.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 9: 1:15 pm – 2:30 pm, via Zoom