To: NTID Faculty
From: Flavia Fleischer, Dean, National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Date: October 22, 2026
Subject: Updated Guidelines for Support Related to Faculty Obtaining Terminal Degrees

This document outlines an updated set of guidelines for supporting NTID faculty who wish to pursue a terminal degree. It responds to a continuing need for faculty with terminal degrees who possess discipline expertise and strong skill in American Sign Language.

Faculty who pursue doctoral studies supported by this fund will be able to develop the credentials and scholarship experience expected for NTID tenure-track positions and promotion, although it should be noted that neither the receipt of such support nor the completion of a terminal degree is a guarantee of promotion or of a successful application for any future position at the Institute for which the recipient may apply. It is not anticipated that faculty who participate in this program will receive course release, although they may be excused from other responsibilities.

Eligible applicants must request support from their Chair and the Dean every semester. The Chair and Dean retain discretion to deny support and are required to explain in writing should they feel unable to support a given application. **Each award, as well as its renewal, is subject to availability of funds in the year in which the request is submitted.**

Eligibility Criteria

1. Full-time continuous teaching/tutoring at RIT/NTID for at least two (2) years prior to the initial request for support*
2. Experience working directly with NTID-supported students in classroom or tutoring situations*
3. Overall performance evaluation ratings of 4 or better over the two (2) years prior to the initial award, and for the duration of the award*
4. SLPI rating of Advanced
5. Demonstrated interest in conducting scholarship
6. Acceptance into, and continued matriculation in, an appropriate accredited terminal degree program

*The asterisked criteria above may be waived at the discretion of the Dean.

Maximum Amount of Support

The maximum amount of support provided toward tuition reimbursement by NTID will be up to $5,000 per academic year, for up to four (4) years and a total of up to $20,000.

This amount supplements the tuition allowance of $750 per semester that RIT already provides for courses taken at another institution. The RIT tuition allowance requires a separate application process that can be found under the heading "Tuition Assistance" at this link:
https://www.rit.edu/humanresources/education-benefits#tuition-assistance

Sample of support being requested – tuition amounts only (do not include fees):

Fall 2027:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID $2406 (6 credits)*	
Spring 2028:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID $2406 (6 credits)*	
Summer 2028:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID ~~$2406~~ $188 (6 credits)*	*AY27-28 = NTID $5000*
Fall 2028:	*$1578 – RIT $750 = NTID $828 (3 credits)*	
Spring 2029:	*$1578 – RIT $750 = NTID $828 (3 credits)*	
Summer 2029:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID $2406 (6 credits)*	*AY28-29 = NTID $4062*
… < repeat for each semester > …		
Summer 2031:	*$3235 – RIT $750 = NTID $2485 (9 credits)*	*AY30-31 = NTID $xxxx*
Total Anticipated Tuition for Full Program:	***$xxxx***	

Initial Application Process

1. An initial application must include:
    a. An explanation of why the support is being requested;
    b. An explanation of why you picked this specific program and how it will benefit your field;
    c. An explanation of how your participation in this program will elevate NTID's research profile;
    d. An explanation of how the eligibility criteria listed above are being met;
    e. A detailed breakdown of the support requested by semester; and
    f. A planned timeline for completion of the program.
2. Review by department chair.
3. Review by the Dean. In reviewing an application, the Dean may consider the recommendation of the Chair but is not bound by it.

Subsequent Reimbursement Process

1. After approval for initial application has been received, faculty member should apply for RIT tuition assistance during each applicable semester and subsequently apply for NTID reimbursement at the end of each semester after course(s) completion, for the remaining tuition amount they paid minus the RIT assistance of $750.
2. Applicants who have been approved for this support are responsible for keeping expenditure records and for submitting them to the NTID Dean's Office for reimbursement at the end of every semester.
3. The Applicant and the NTID Dean's Office will be responsible for maintaining these records and ensuring that the amount requested and approved for reimbursement does not exceed the funding support negotiated at the time the award was first authorized.

Conditions of Acceptance of Support

A faculty member who accepts support will agree in writing to the following basic conditions:

1. Commitment to years of service: For each year the faculty member receives support, they agree to remain a full-time NTID employee for an equivalent number of years after being awarded a terminal degree. (This condition assumes that NTID continues to employ the faculty member.) A faculty member who voluntarily elects to leave full-time employment at NTID before fulfilling this service obligation to the University will be required to repay a pro-rated amount of support received.

2. Commitment to timely degree completion: A faculty member receiving support is expected to be awarded a terminal degree no more than 24 months after completing their coursework. If they fail to be awarded the degree during that period of time, repayment of the full amount of support is required.

Tax Implications

Federal tax laws allow RIT/NTID to provide its employees up to $5,250 per year for graduate education with no tax consequences. Support in excess of this amount may be taxable unless it is deemed to be a "working condition fringe benefit." This determination is based on satisfying one of two tests:

1. The education is necessary to maintain or improve skills required by the individual in their current job; or
2. The education meets the express requirements of the individual's employer, or the law, as a condition for the retention of their job, employment status, or rate of compensation.

If the educational expenses being reimbursed meet one of the two tests identified above, then they are excludable from gross income in their entirety as long as the educational expenses are NOT:

1. Required to meet the minimum educational requirements for the individual's present trade or business, or
2. Part of a program of study that will qualify the individual for a new trade or business.

Because a terminal degree is not required in order to continue employment as a lecturer, NFF fellow, or already-tenured faculty member, it appears likely that total annual reimbursement amounts in excess of $5,250 will generally be taxable as wages to the recipient. Faculty members are encouraged to take this into account when requesting support from this program in addition to RIT's standard $750/semester tuition allowance.

Application for NTID Lecturer Tuition Assistance for Terminal Degree

-- Initial Application --

Refer to attached Official Guidelines updated in 2026

Faculty Member Name:_____ Faculty UID:_____

NTID Department:_____ NTID Email:_____

- Department chairperson approval and Dean approval are required every semester.
- Applicants approved are responsible for keeping expenditure records each semester.
- Maximum amount of support will be up to $5,000 per academic year for up to four (4) years.
- Attach official tuition receipt with college letterhead as proof of payment.
- Attach official statement on college letterhead listing course name(s), tuition amount, and semester.
- Documents should be submitted at the end of each semester after course(s) are completed.
- If NTID support + RIT assistance exceeds $5,250, there may be tax implications to the faculty member.
- Late reimbursement requests for previous academic year will be declined after fiscal year closes on Sept 30. Faculty member is responsible to pay full taxes on reimbursement amount for late requests.

Proof of Eligibility Criteria:

1. Full-time continuous teaching/tutoring at RIT/NTID for at least two years prior to the initial request for support.
2. Experience working directly with NTID-supported students in classroom or tutoring situations.
3. SLPI rating of advanced.
4. Overall performance evaluation ratings of 4 or better over the 2 years prior to the initial award, and for the duration of the award.
5. Demonstrated interest in conducting scholarship.
6. Acceptance into and continued matriculation in an appropriate accredited terminal degree program.

Conditions of Acceptance of Support:

A lecturer who accepts support will agree in writing to the following basic conditions:

A. Commitment to years of service - For each year the faculty member receives support, he or she agrees to remain a full-time NTID employee for an equivalent number of years after being awarded his or her terminal degree. (This condition assumes that the university continues to employ the faculty member.) A faculty member who voluntarily elects to leave full-time employment at NTID before fulfilling his/her service obligations to the university will be required to repay a prorated amount of support received.

B. Commitment to timely degree completion – A faculty member receiving support is expected to be awarded a terminal degree no more than 24 months after completing his or her coursework. If he/she fails to be awarded the degree during that period of time, repayment of the full amount of support is required.

Faculty Narrative:

Explain below why you request this support, why you picked this specific program and how it will benefit your field, how your participation in this program will elevate NTID's research profile, how eligibility criteria are being met, and provide a breakdown of the support requested per semester (sample below), with a planned timeline for completion of the program. If you need more space, attach additional pages to this application.

Sample breakdown of support being requested – tuition amounts only (do not include fees):

Fall 2027:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID $2406 (6 credits)*	
Spring 2028:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID $2406 (6 credits)*	
Summer 2028:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID ~~$2406~~ $188 (6 credits)*	*AY27-28 = NTID $5000*
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Summer 2029:	*$3156 – RIT $750 = NTID $2406 (6 credits)*	*AY28-29 = NTID $4062*
… < repeat for each semester > …		
Summer 2031:	*$3235 – RIT $750 = NTID $2485 (9 credits)*	*AY30-31 = NTID $xxxx*

Total Anticipated Tuition for Full Program: $xxxx

Signature of Faculty Member		Date
Print Name of Chairperson	Signature of Chairperson	Date
Print Name of NTID Dean	Signature of NTID Dean	Date

Application for NTID Lecturer Tuition Assistance for Terminal Degree

-- Reimbursement Request (end of applicable semester) --

Refer to Attached Official Guidelines updated in 2026

Faculty Member Name:_____ Faculty UID:_____

NTID Department:_____ NTID Email:_____

Academic Year:_____ Semester: ___Jan-Apr _____May-Aug _____Sept-Dec

Reimbursement Requested: _____

- Obtain RIT tuition assistance and deduct that amount from NTID reimbursement requested.
- Department chairperson approval and Dean approval are required every semester.
- Applicants approved are responsible for keeping expenditure records each semester.
- Maximum amount of support will be up to $5,000 per academic year for up to four (4) years.
- Attach official tuition receipt with college letterhead as proof of payment.
- Attach official statement on college letterhead listing course name(s), tuition amount, and semester.
- Documents should be submitted at the end of each semester after course(s) are completed.
- If NTID support + RIT assistance exceeds $5,250, there may be tax implications to the faculty member.
- Late reimbursement requests for previous academic year will be declined after fiscal year closes on Sept 30. Faculty member is responsible to pay full taxes on reimbursement amount for late requests.

Proof of Eligibility Criteria:

1. Full-time continuous teaching/tutoring at RIT/NTID for at least two years prior to the initial request for support.
2. Experience working directly with NTID-supported students in classroom or tutoring situations.
3. SLPI rating of advanced.
4. Overall performance evaluation ratings of 4 or better over the 2 years prior to the initial award, and for the duration of the award.
5. Demonstrated interest in conducting scholarship.
6. Acceptance into and continued matriculation in an appropriate accredited terminal degree program.

Conditions of Acceptance of Support:

A lecturer who accepts support will agree in writing to the following basic conditions:

A. Commitment to years of service - For each year the faculty member receives support, he or she agrees to remain a full-time NTID employee for an equivalent number of years after being awarded his or her terminal degree. (This condition assumes that the university continues to employ the faculty member.) A faculty member who voluntarily elects to leave full-time employment at NTID before fulfilling his/her service obligations to the university will be required to repay a prorated amount of support received.

B. Commitment to timely degree completion – A faculty member receiving support is expected to be awarded a terminal degree no more than 24 months after completing his or her coursework. If he/she fails to be awarded the degree during that period of time, repayment of the full amount of support is required.

Faculty Narrative:

If there are any changes to narrative provided in initial application, please describe below, such as, changes in rationale, criteria, requested support amounts, and planned timeline for completion of the program.

Signature of Faculty Member		Date
Print Name of Chairperson	Signature of Chairperson	Date
Print Name of NTID Dean	Signature of NTID Dean	Date