RUSS

(Request for Undergraduate Student Support)

Cornell is required to review and report financial aid awarded to students for a number of regulatory purposes. In order to ensure that we comply with regulations, any financial support for undergraduate students should be processed through the Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment.

The IRS now requires educational institutions to include scholarships and fellowships on its 1098-T reporting for the Hope and Lifetime Learning tax credits. Scholarship and fellowship support is broadly defined to include payments other than wages, loans, and prizes/awards. In developing procedures to ensure compliance with IRS reporting requirements, we discovered that some aid to students is being processed on payment requests. This form of payment bypasses review by the Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment and appropriate 1098-T reporting.

Therefore, effective July 1, 2004, all financial support will be processed by the Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment.

When to Submit a RUSS

A RUSS should be used to process reimbursements to undergraduate students for expenses related to study, research, travel, stipends, and summer living expense grants. We do not process awards for grad students.

A RUSS should not be used to process scholarship payments to students who receive financial support from an external organization unless the donor specifically states that the support is to be applied to study, research, or travel expenses. If a donor provides funds for scholarship support, the scholarship is processed through the Financial Aid Office as part of the student's financial aid package.

A RUSS should not be used to process prizes and awards. Prizes and awards for outstanding achievement or competition should be processed using the Payment Request System to ensure proper tax reporting (1099, not 1098-T). These accounts are set up in Accounting with a function code “495”. Note: If the award is for outstanding job performance, IRS classifies it as wages and it should be processed through payroll. Please contact Student Employment with questions regarding this type of award.

Processing Guidelines for Undergraduate Student Support

A Request for Undergraduate Student Support (RUSS) form must be completed and returned to the Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment for payments to students in support of his or her study/research (i.e. - research stipends, additional expenses required for class, travel, etc.).

Be sure to include the award name and account number. If there is no item type associated with the account you are using, Financial Aid staff will request an item type for you. Please provide the required information, including the account number and account title, on the RUSS form.

Please contact Ginger Guidi 255-5821 or gpe1 with any questions.