

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America
Graduate Study Committee Policy
(Adopted June, 2008)
(Amended June, 2008; June, 2011, June 2023, June 2025)

Name: Graduate Study Committee.

Purpose: To prioritize and fund requests for financial aid to support graduate study, in accordance with the stated criteria; to make possible work toward graduate degrees for certain selected qualified Reformed Presbyterians so that their usefulness in the RPCNA may be greatly increased.

Membership: Presidents of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (RPTS) and Geneva College, and two members elected by Synod who are not employees of RPTS or Geneva College and one of whom shall be chairman.

Applicant eligibility: Membership in the RPCNA; admissibility to a recognized graduate school.

Selection criteria: Present position of the applicant in relation to the current needs of the church; academic record and, where applicable, occupational experience; statement of applicant's intended area of service to the church; recommendations, with special reference to the applicant's probable success as a graduate student and in the area of intended service to the church; statement of applicant's financial need.

Ordinarily, funds will be granted to an individual only after his or her proposed program of study has received the endorsement and support of their session, or their presbytery, or one of the boards of Synod. The following funding guidelines shall be used by the Committee:

- 1) With session endorsement: up to \$2,500 per year
- 2) With presbytery endorsement: up to \$5,000 per year
- 3) With Synod board endorsement for a specific role in an RP institution or RP ministry: funding as determined by the Committee

Only in extraordinary cases will funding be granted to an applicant who also receives funds for the same graduate study program from other Synod sources, when the funds from these other sources exceed the amount to be awarded through the Committee.

Award type: GSC awards are grants in most cases (numbers 1 and 2 in grant guidelines above). However, for those awarded to individuals identified and endorsed by a Synod board to fill specific positions in an RP institution or ministry (such as RPTS and Geneva College), GSC awards come with an expectation of service. In those cases, GSC awards are considered as a loan of which one-fifth (20%) is forgiven for each year of satisfactory service in the RP institution or RP ministry beginning at the time of receipt of the advanced degree. Therefore, after five years of service with degree in hand, the total of all GSC awards are forgiven. The entirety of the loan will be forgiven in the event of premature disability or death. The institution or board may forgive the loan of their own choice if some extenuating circumstance requires termination of employment. The GSC will maintain records of loan forgiveness schedules and report these to Synod.

In all cases, awards will be restricted to payments of invoices submitted by the degree-granting institution for tuition expenses and receipts for other documented direct costs related to the program.

Administration: The Committee is responsible to: keep the policies and procedural guidelines before the denomination; receive and review applications for funding; decide on funding for the requests within the limitations of the funds available to the Committee; inform the applicants and the Treasurer of the amount of funding.

Deadlines: The deadlines for applying for financial aid are April 1 and October 1