

Graduate School Guiding Principles for Assistantships

Graduate teaching, research, and service assistantships and fellowships provide students with training and professional development opportunities that augment a student's academic program of study. In addition, they provide financial support to ensure the student's success in their degree program. The duties assigned students on graduate assistantships (20 hours per week on average) are determined by the department chair, graduate program director, or assigned faculty mentor and should serve to advance the career training objectives of the student as well as the needs of the department. The following guiding principles apply to all students funded by the Graduate School's assistantship lines.

1) Each unit will receive the same number of Graduate Assistantships (GAs) as it has used in recent years (the negotiated number that will return to the Graduate School), and the Graduate School will provide an equal number of tuition matches from our tuition budget. We cannot provide tuition support for students on stipends not funded by the Graduate School; the office or program funding the stipend must fund the tuition as well.

2) All offers of funding and admission will be made through the Graduate School using SLATE.

3) Units will make decisions about how the assistantships will be distributed to programs in their units; units will be responsible for paying for Criminal Background Checks (CBCs) for all students who receive assistantships for the first time.

4) The Graduate School has had a long-standing catalog policy that doctoral students we recruit to the university with a promise of a fellowship or centrally funded graduate assistantship (whether as a GRA or GTA) are eligible to renew funding for three additional years so long as they are making progress toward their degrees, fulfill the obligations of their assistantship, and earn at least a 3.0. University Fellows are expected to do the same, as well as maintaining a 3.25; fellows are promised two years of funding from the Graduate School, and two years from the academic unit, so units must plan on funding students in years 3 and 4 from their allotment of stipends or from grant-funding. Academic programs may not offer single years of funding to new students or cut students' funding if they are eligible for renewal from the centrally-funded stipends.

5) Master's students who are recruited to the university with a promise of an assistantship are eligible to renew the GA for one additional year so long as they are making progress toward their degrees, fulfill the obligations of their assistantships, and earn at least a 3.0.

6) Additionally, all funded students must be enrolled full-time to receive a stipend: this means that they must enroll in nine (9) hours in the fall and spring semesters, and doctoral students only must enroll in six (6) hours in the summer. We do not pay tuition for master's students in the summer as their stipends cover only 10 months per year.

7) Summer tuition is limited to six hours because that is all that the university budgets for summer tuition; doctoral students MUST be enrolled for summer prior to the start of the

summer semester because we cannot cross fiscal years with our tuition budget. This means that we can no longer add summer tuition after July 1.

8) Contract offers for **all doctoral assistantships will have the same start date in their first year: August 1, and will run through June 30** (making year-one 11 months of funding); years 2-4 for doctoral students will run from July 1 through June 30 (12 months for each subsequent year). If a student graduates or resigns before the end of a contract, the student will be paid through the month of graduation or the month of resignation (i.e., no stopping pay in the middle of a month), unless the student begins employment elsewhere prior to the end of the contract. Students may not receive a stipend while they are employed elsewhere for more than 9 hours per week.

9) Contracts for all master's assistantships will have the same start date of August 1 and run for 10 months only through May 30.

10) When students leave a line before the end of a contract (whether due to ineligibility, resignation, graduation, transfer to another institution or acceptance of a full-time position), the line returns to the Graduate School for redistribution, but we will work with the units to try to fund a student in the same unit as the student who leaves. This will not always be possible. Only in these cases might a student be funded for a partial year (that is, a current student who is not already receiving a stipend might be given a stipend for just part of the year; this practice is not best practice and should be rare). Lines that are not filled by August 1 will return to the Graduate School for recruitment and redistribution.

11) Doctoral stipend rates can be no less than the minimum set by the Graduate School for each program/discipline; some units wish to supplement our minimums, and they may do so after consulting with the Graduate School. Supplements must be the same for all students in the same programs.

12) Master's stipend rates must be no lower than \$15/hour or \$13,000 per ten-month contract.

13) Fellowships and Assistantships are intended to support a student's progress in only one degree-granting program. Students may not take courses that will apply toward a second degree, nor may they take courses that will lead to credentials, such as a graduate certificate, unless the certificate courses may also be used to partially fulfill requirements of the degree program in which they are enrolled.

14) Students who are enrolled in fully online degree programs are not eligible to receive University Fellowships or Graduate Assistantships.

15) All students who will be assigned teaching duties **MUST** attend and complete all parts of both the general and the GTA orientation (online and in-person parts too). This meets an accreditation standard.