



POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

NUMBER: 0002
DIVISION: Graduate School
TITLE: Graduate Assistantship Policy
DATE: November 16, 2021
REVISED: November 16, 2021

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I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The following policy addresses issues including eligibility, appointment processes, work assignment, oversight, and evaluation of graduate assistants.

A full-time UT Tyler graduate student may have assistantship appointments satisfying the conditions described below:

- Graduate Assistant (GA): The student performs duties outside their academic department. No tuition remission is attached to the GA appointment. They are limited to 19.5 hours per week.
- Graduate Research Assistant (GRA): The student performs research related to the student's field of study. A GRA is classified as exempt from the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and is paid on a monthly basis and may have an appointment for up to 20 hours per week involving projects pursuant to their degree, not including time spent on coursework or personal research.
- Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA): The student may assist a faculty member in grading, instruction in the classroom and laboratory, preparing apparatus or material for demonstrations, leading discussion or tutoring sessions, and posting web-based materials. A GTA with the proper credentials (See, Handbook of Operating Procedures, Sec. 3.1.1) may also be the instructor of record for a course or laboratory. A GTA position is usually held in the student's major field or a closely related field. A GTA is classified as exempt from the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), is paid on a monthly basis, and may have an appointment for up to 20 hours per week.

A GRA or GTA position should enable the enhancement of the student's professional skills/knowledge. GRAs and GTAs should not be routinely assigned clerical duties. GRAs and GTAs are required only to perform those duties that are directly related to their appointment. No GA, GRA, or GTA should be asked or required to provide inappropriate services, (e.g., childcare, pet care, or other personal services), as part of their responsibilities. Assignment of assistantships should be equitable, and tasks assigned should be distributed equitably amongst all assistants. Appropriate training and supervision must be provided for assistants working in laboratories.

This policy establishes the roles and responsibilities of the Academic Program Coordinator and the procedures through which GA's, GRA's, and GTA's shall be selected. It reflects current definitions and practices.

II. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

To secure and maintain employment, all graduate students are expected to have good academic standing as defined in the catalog. They must also be in good standing with the Office of Student Conduct and Intervention and The Graduate School at the time of hire and throughout the employment period.

A GRA or GTA must have the permission of their degree program coordinator to hold an assistantship.

1. A GRA or GTA position may be held only by students who have been fully or provisionally admitted to a degree program. Non-degree seeking students and conditional students cannot serve as a GRA/GTA.
2. A GRA or GTA receiving a tuition waiver must begin on or before the official Census Date. Exceptions may be requested with a justification provided by the School or College Dean and must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
3. Continuing GRAs and GTAs may be appointed in the summer provided they were registered for and completed the previous spring semester, and are enrolled in fall classes. The Graduate School grants discretion to each graduate program to require or waive a minimum summer enrollment.
4. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average to retain their GA, GRA, or GTA position. Students who fail to maintain good academic standing during their first 12 hours will become ineligible for a graduate assistantship and any out-of-state tuition waiver. Some departments may require a higher grade point average. The graduate coordinator for each program is responsible for monitoring and certifying fulfillment of this requirement.
5. Students may accept more than one GRA or GTA position with the approval of their major department if the total appointment does not exceed 20 hours per week.
6. GA, GRA, or GTA positions can be awarded only to full-time registered graduate students. If a student drops below a full load during the semester, the assistantship will be terminated. Exceptions:
 - Students who are completing their degree and are enrolled only for the minimum number of hours required to complete the program.
 - Courses recommended for the student's degree plan are not offered that semester.
 - A doctoral student preparing for preliminary examinations.
 - Other exceptions may be allowed with approval from the Dean of the Graduate School.

7. All students who have accepted an offer of employment as a GA, GRA or GTA must complete all onboarding requirements with HR prior to beginning work.
8. Students that were required to submit English language proficiency exam scores for admission who are applying for a GTA position must have exam scores equivalent to or above the following:
 - TOEFL – speaking sub score of 25
 - IELTS – speaking sub score of 7.0
 - PTE Academic – speaking sub score of 70
 - Duolingo English Test – either a Conversation or Production sub score of 120

Exemptions to the above minimum language proficiency exam scores may be requested at the discretion of the hiring manager. An interview that tests the student’s language skills is necessary; the request for exemption must be made in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School.

International students studying through distance learning technologies from foreign countries are not permitted to hold on-campus employment. While employed with UT Tyler, international students may not work from their home country.

III. APPOINTMENT AND OFFER

Each Graduate Assistant (GA, GRA, OR GTA) must be provided with a letter of appointment that clearly describes the work assignment, expectations, dates of employment, etc. The letter of appointment must contain a statement that the offer is contingent on the completion of a satisfactory criminal background investigation.

IV. OUT-OF-STATE TUITION REMISSION

Pursuant to the [Texas Education Code, 54.212](#), a graduate student may be eligible to pay the resident tuition rate as long as:

- The graduate student is employed with UT Tyler as either a Graduate Teaching Assistant and/or a Graduate Research Assistant, and
- Is employed at least half time (20 hours per week) in a position related to their degree program.

A waiver request form must be completed prior to Census each semester. Payment of course and other mandatory fees is the student's responsibility.

V. TRAINING

All students who serve as Graduate Teaching Assistants and who have no prior teaching experience are required to participate in a GTA training program as directed by their respective department, or college.

VI. EVALUATION

The faculty or staff member who supervises a Graduate Teaching Assistant who is the Instructor of Record must provide the GTA with regular feedback about their performance and must conduct an evaluation at least once during the regular academic year. (See, Handbook of Operating Procedures, Sec. 3.1.1) To ensure students are successful, it is recommended that the supervisor

evaluates all graduate students under an assistantship and provides regular feedback about their work and performance.

VII. REASON FOR REVISION

November 16, 2021 To clarify existing policy

VIII. RELATED POLICIES

Adapted from: <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/index.php?policy=313>