

# UT TYLER GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP POLICY

## GENERAL

The following policy addresses issues ranging from eligibility, appointment processes, work assignment, oversight, and evaluation of graduate assistants. A full-time graduate student may not work or be paid under any employment classification at UT Tyler other than Graduate Assistant, Graduate Research Assistant or Graduate Teaching Assistant. In addition, principal investigators should include payment of stipends and tuition for Graduate Research Assistants in all grant proposals, unless prohibited by the granting agency.

## DEFINITIONS OF WORK

There are three types of graduate assistantships: GA, GTA, and GRA, described below. GTA's and GRA's should not be routinely assigned clerical duties or other duties generally considered to be "hourly-rate activity." A GTA or GRA must provide for the enhancement of the student's professional skills/knowledge.

- 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. Numbers 5-7 below under General Requirements also apply to GA's.
- Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA): The student performs departmental or interdepartmental 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 salaried basis for up to 20 hours per week, not including time spent on coursework or personal research.
- Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA): The student may assist a faculty member in grading undergraduate homework and quizzes, 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. 3.021) may also be the instructor of record for a course or laboratory. A GTA 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) and is paid on a salaried basis for up to 20 hours per week.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS TO HOLD A GRADUATE TA/RA ASSISTANTSHIP

***It is expected that all selected employees will be in good academic standing as well as be in good standing with UT Tyler Judicial Affairs and The Graduate School at time of hire. Hired employees will be expected to maintain good standing with all above mentioned offices in order maintain employment.***

1. A GTA or GRA must have the permission of their degree program to hold an assistantship.
2. A GTA or GRA may be held only by students who have been fully admitted to a degree program. Non-degree seeking students or provisional/conditional students cannot hold a GTA/GRA.
3. A GTA or GRA must begin on or before the official census date of the semester (12th day for fall and spring, 4th day for Summers I & I, 9th day for Long Summer)
4. Continuing GTAs and GRAs may be appointed in the summer without minimum registration, provided they were registered for and completed the previous spring semester. A graduate program may require a minimum summer enrollment.
5. Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average in order to retain their assistantships. Students who fail to maintain academic good standing will become ineligible for a graduate assistantship and any out-of-state tuition waiver in the next semester. Some departments may require a higher grade point average.
6. Students may accept more than one graduate assistantship with the approval of their major department as long as the total appointment does not exceed 19.5 hours per week and the total stipend does not exceed university guidelines.
7. Graduate assistantships 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:
  - a. Students who are completing their thesis or dissertation and are enrolled only for the minimum number of hours required for the thesis or dissertation.
  - b. A doctoral student preparing for preliminary examinations (requires approval by Graduate School Dean)

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HOLDING ASSISTANTSHIPS

1. International students must complete a part-time employee packet in the Office of Human Resources no later than one week before the beginning of the semester. This packet contains documentation that establishes their employment eligibility to work in the United States.
2. Students from non-English speaking countries who are applying for a GTA position must provide ONE of the following test scores.
  - TOEFL/paper based = 600 minimum and Test of Spoken English (TSE)= 50 or 7 on the speaking portion of the IELTS
  - TOEFL/computer-based = 250 minimum and Test of Spoken English (TSE)= 50 or 7 on the speaking portion of the IELTS
  - TOEFL/internet-based = combined minimum=86 with the following minimum scores: Writing=19 Speaking =27 Listening= 14 Reading= 19 or 7 on the speaking portion of the IELTS

## ADMISSION AND OFFER

Whenever possible an admission decision should be accompanied by an offer for a Graduate Teaching or Research Assistant position. This is particularly important for international students since 1) we are competing with other universities who make offers at the same time they admit and 2) international students can use the stipend information to offset their financial requirement.

Each Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant must be provided with a letter of appointment that describes clearly the work assignment, expectations, etc.

## OUT OF STATE TUITION REMISSION

Research and Graduate Teaching Assistants who are not Texas residents may be eligible for a remission of the out-of-state tuition for the semesters they have an appointment. Payment of course and other mandatory fees is the student's responsibility.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Teaching and Research Assistants are required only to perform those duties that are directly related to their appointment. No GA, GTA, or GRA 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 evenly distributed among all assistants. Special care should be given to the distribution of tasks among assistants working in laboratories.

If a student holding an assistantship needs to be absent from assigned duties, the students should request permission of the supervisor and arrange for making up the time.

## 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 in their respective department, or college.

## EVALUATION

The faculty member or staff person who supervises a Graduate Teaching Assistant who is the Instructor of Record must provide regular feedback to students and must conduct an evaluation at least once during the regular academic year.