GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

University of New Orleans
Graduate School
Graduate Assistantship Policy

POLICY

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1. Purpose
The University of New Orleans provides graduate assistantships to students enrolled in its graduate degree programs. The purpose of this document is to define the types of available graduate assistantships and state the approved academic and financial policies and procedures that govern those assistantships.

2. Definitions and Conditions
The Graduate School at the University of New Orleans recognizes student employment as a graduate assistantship only under the definitions, conditions, and categories below. Student employment outside these parameters will not be deemed assistantships. Although Graduate Assistants make meaningful contributions to the operations of the University of New Orleans, they are recognized primarily as students and secondarily as employees. Students employed as graduate assistants receive a stipend from their hiring department.

Eligibility

Students offered regular admission to a graduate degree program are considered eligible for a graduate assistantship if they maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average for all graduate coursework attempted, satisfy enrollment requirements (see below) International students must also provide evidence that they meet the minimum requirement for English proficiency. Students employed as Teaching Associates must have a master's degree or 18 graduate credit hours in the specified teaching field to satisfy requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). If a student on an F-1 Visa is to be hired as a Teaching Associate, they must provide evidence of above average English proficiency (100 on internet-based TOEFL). Graduate Assistants are not permitted to be employed as a part-time faculty member.

2.1 Enrollment - students hired as graduate assistants must be enrolled full-time during regular semesters. Full-time enrollment is 9 graduate credit hours in Fall and Spring. Students working during the Summer are not required to be enrolled.
2.1.1 Audit courses are not counted towards course enrollment requirements.

2.1.2 The enrolled courses must be graduate-level (5000, 6000, 7000) in order to be counted towards course enrollment requirements.

2.1.3 7040 (Exam or Thesis Only) is a 0-credit course for students completing degree requirements. This course will satisfy enrollment requirements for purposes of GA hiring if a student has also applied for graduation. It does not satisfy enrollment requirements for other purposes (financial aid, international visa restrictions). Students may enroll in 7040 one time only.

2.2 Types of Graduate Assistantships

2.2.1 Professional Assistantships (PA) These are students who perform technical or administrative functions that are specifically related to the student’s course of study. Work assignments should complement the degree goals, foster professional development, and expand student’s skills and knowledge in their area of study. The student’s advisor must certify the usefulness of the work towards goals of the degree.

2.2.2 Research Assistantships (RA) are usually funded by a grant and focus on supporting and engaging in the research of an established faculty member.

2.2.3 Teaching Assistantships (TA) are teaching positions and there are two sub-categories:

2.2.3.1 Teaching Assistant – assist with teaching, do grading, tutoring, help sessions, etc. and may teach laboratories, under supervision. They may not be instructor of record.

2.2.3.2 Teaching Associate – leading instruction of undergraduate students and instructor of record for undergraduate courses. Only students who have an earned master’s degree or a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the area of instruction are eligible to be employed in this capacity. The Teaching Associate is designated as instructor of record and assigns grades. Teaching Associates may not provide instruction in graduate courses.

2.2.3.3 Teaching Associates will be evaluated by their supervisor each semester.

2.3 Graduate Assistantship Workload

2.3.1 Graduate Assistants are expected to work no more than 20 hours per week. Units may hire Graduate Assistants on either a half-time (20 hours a week) or quarter-time (10 hours a week) basis. Teaching Associates should only be hired on a half-time appointment (20 hours a week).
2.3.2 Monitoring of workloads – the hiring department supervisor is responsible for monitoring the workload of GAs in their unit. The Department Chair, Director or Dean is responsible for overseeing scheduling. It is the responsibility of each supervisor to review and report to the Executive Director of the Graduate School each instance in which a GA’s assignment deviates from the GA workload policy. The Executive Director of the Graduate School will have final responsibility for the approval of graduate assistant workloads.

2.3.3 Graduate Assistantships are based on a workload of 10 or 20 hours per week for which the student receives a stipend.

2.3.4 Teaching Assistantships are based upon the recognition that the basic credit hour teaching load per semester is six. The teaching load may be adjusted for research and administrative duties beyond that normally expected for academic instruction.

2.3.4.1 Courses
Normally teaching loads are assigned in increments of standard 3-credit hour undergraduate courses. Some courses may have fewer or more contact hours per week. Separate sections of the same course will be counted as separate courses as long as they do not meet simultaneously.

2.3.4.2 Laboratory Instruction
A laboratory course at the undergraduate level which meets for 3 hours per week constitutes a 1 credit-hour course. Separate sections of the same course will be counted as separate courses as long as they do not meet simultaneously.

2.3.4.3 Office Hours
Office hours are a part of the teaching assistant’s instructional and student advising responsibilities. All Teaching Associates must keep a minimum of 3 office hours per week. Office hours must be posted on or beside office doors, on their course syllabus and registered with department offices.

2.4 Length of Appointment
The length of appointment is the period of time during which a graduate assistant is required to work. Assistantship appointments can be made for an academic year, a fiscal year or a period of appointment if hired for less than 6 months but not for a full academic semester. Renewal of a Graduate Assistantship beyond the present term of appointment is not automatic or guaranteed. Graduate Assistants will be evaluated by their supervisor annually.

2.5 Length of Service as a Graduate Assistant
No doctoral degree student may hold a graduate assistantship for longer than five years. Master’s degree students employed as graduate assistants will complete at least 18 credit hours towards their degree each academic year. Since no master’s degree exceeds 60 hours of coursework, no master’s degree student may hold a graduate assistantship for longer than three years.
3. **Stipends**

3.1 Graduate Assistants and the Fair Labor Standards Act

All employers of graduate assistants are required to follow the reporting and hiring requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act ([http://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/](http://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/)) which ensures that employees are paid at or above minimum wage and employees are paid for actual hours worked. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act graduate assistants must be paid at or above minimum wage. The minimum wage as of 2009 is $7.25/hour. The stipend is considered taxable income. **Please refer to the stipend table to determine the minimum stipend for each category of assistantship.**

3.1.1 Pay Period – graduate assistants receive their stipend through semi-monthly payroll deposit on the 15th and last day of each month.

3.1.2 Research Assistantships – Due to the variety of sources of funding for RAs it is understood that the upper level of these stipends may vary. This variance should be attributed to the level of knowledge and/or expertise needed for the research and project in question. Some funding agencies may set a threshold for stipends for RAs working under a specific grant. Widely divergent stipends for students working in similar areas of research and within the same program are not acceptable. Hiring departments are advised to maintain oversight of equity issues which may arise regarding stipends for grant-funded RAships.

3.2 Teaching Assistantships -Within a department or degree program the stipend level for types of TAs should conform to a set dollar amount or range. For example, in one department a TA should not be making more than any other TA in the same department. Units should follow the stipend range for each TA type and inform the Graduate School of any changes.

3.3 Units may offer a stipend that accounts for the cost of tuition to the student, based on the availability of funds. If the intent is to include the cost of tuition in the stipend, units should project 10% increases annually as allowed by the GRAD Act. Current University tuition and fees are posted on the Bursar website ([http://www.uno.edu/bursar/TuitionFees/index.aspx](http://www.uno.edu/bursar/TuitionFees/index.aspx)).

3.4 Extra Compensation is not permitted for Graduate Assistants.

3.5 Taxability

3.5.1 All compensation is subject to federal and state tax regulations. International students hired as graduate assistants should adhere to AP 2.14 Employment of International Faculty, Staff and Students ([http://www.uno.edu/president/documents/AdministrativePolicies/AP02.14.pdf](http://www.uno.edu/president/documents/AdministrativePolicies/AP02.14.pdf))

4. **Tuition and Fees**
4.1 All Graduate Assistants receive a waiver of the non-resident fee. These waivers are only applied during the duration of their appointment. In order to receive the waiver, GA appointments must be completed by the 14th class day in Fall and Spring or by the 7th day in the Summer. To be considered complete the Personnel Action Form, the Direct Deposit Form, and applicable tax documents must be received by Payroll. The Graduate School will enter a GA code in the system that will apply the appropriate out-of-state waiver.

4.2 Depending on availability of funds, a hiring unit may offer a remission of the in-state tuition and Graduate Enhancement Fee. The source of funding can be university funds (general funds), grants, scholarships, or third-party.

4.2.1 If a GA receives a tuition remission, the rate will correspond to the workload level. A half-time GA (20 hours a week) could receive a full (100%) remission of the in-state tuition and graduate enhancement fee. A quarter-time GA (10 hours a week) could receive a partial (50%) remission of the in-state tuition and graduate enhancement fee.

4.2.2 Tuition remission from the general fund is not permitted for the summer.

Graduate Assistants are otherwise responsible for the payment of their tuition and fees. Two methods of payment are available to Academic and Fiscal GAs:

4.2.1 Payment in full during regular registration
4.2.2. Extended payment plan

Graduate Assistants are responsible for paying tuition and fees by the dates posted in the Bulletin on the Registrar website (http://www.uno.edu/registrar/bulletin/index.aspx). Failure to make payment in time may result in late fees or purge of class schedule.

5. Hiring

5.1 The forms required for initiating or renewing a graduate assistantship appointment are posted on the SharePoint site (https://sharepoint.uno.edu) Graduate Assistantship hiring documents must go through several units on campus including Graduate School, Business Affairs, Sponsored Programs Accounting, Human Resources, and Payroll. It is therefore important to allow up to two weeks for internal processing when hiring a GA to ensure timely delivery of the out-of-state fee waiver and payroll deduction.

Revised 4/28/14
# GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Eligible to receive Tuition from Gen Fund Pool?</th>
<th>Can be “quarter-time” (10 hrs/wk)?</th>
<th>Minimum Stipend (AY)</th>
<th>Minimum Stipend (FY)</th>
<th>Minimum Stipend w/tuition (14-15) .10% increase (AY)</th>
<th>Minimum Stipend w/tuition (14-15) .10% increase (FY)</th>
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<td>Continuing TA, RA and SA</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>$5,400</td>
<td>$7,800</td>
<td>$12,290</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Teaching Assistant - Master’s</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$5,400 for 20 hrs $2,700 for 10 hrs</td>
<td>$7,800 for 20 hrs $3,900 for 10 hrs</td>
<td>$12,290 for 20 hrs $6,145 for 10 hrs*</td>
<td>$16,717 for 20 hrs $8,359 or 10 hrs*</td>
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<td>$12,290 for 20 hrs $6,145 for 10 hrs*</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Teaching Assistant – PhD</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<td>$7,800 for 20 hrs $3,900 for 10 hrs</td>
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<td>$1,290 for 20 hrs $6,145 for 10 hrs*</td>
<td>$8,359 for 10 hrs*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*10 hrs receives 50% tuition exemption

Tuition Exemption calculations are based on 9 credit hours and include Graduate Enhancement Fees: $6,890 for AY and $8,917 for FY.