



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW ORLEANS

**ADMINISTERED BY: Office of Vice  
President for Academic Affairs**

**Policy No:** AP-AA-25.2  
**TITLE:** Graduate Assistants  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 20, 2014\*  
(\*Policy Revised, see below)  
**CANCELLATION:**  
**REVIEW DATE:** Fall 2017

## **PURPOSE**

To set forth policies to ensure that the hiring of Graduate Assistants is in compliance with academic regulations of the Graduate School and consistent with the mission of the University.

## **AUTHORITY**

*Part Two, Chapter II, Section XV of the Bylaws and Rules of the University of Louisiana System.*

## **OBJECTIVE**

To clarify the policy and regulations on eligibility, employment, and benefits of a Graduate Assistantship.

## **GENERAL POLICY**

Graduate Assistants are full-time, degree-seeking students in good standing, employed by one or more units on campus for not more than 20 hours per week.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **1. ELIGIBILITY**

Students offered regular or conditional admission to a graduate degree program are considered eligible if they maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average for all graduate coursework attempted and are enrolled in at least nine credit hours in fall and spring; undergraduate hours do not count toward the total number of hours. Given a compelling rationale, approved by the relevant administrators (hiring unit heads and Director of the Graduate School), temporary exceptions may be granted regarding the number and types of credit hours enrolled per semester. Enrollment is required in the summer term (minimum of three graduate credit hours). International students must also provide evidence that they meet the minimum requirement for English proficiency. Students employed as Teaching Associates (defined below) must have a master's degree or 18 graduate credit hours in the specified teaching area. If a student who is not a native English speaker is to be hired as a Teaching Associate, they must provide evidence of above average

English proficiency (100 on internet-based TOEFL, 7.5 overall band on IELTS, 68 on PTE). Graduate Assistants are not permitted to be employed as part-time faculty members.

## 2. EMPLOYMENT

### A. TYPES OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS (GAs).

There are four basic categories of Graduate Assistants: Instructional Assistants, Research Assistants (RA), Professional Assistants, and Athletics Assistants.

1. **Instructional Assistants.** These students provide instructional support within an academic unit related to their graduate degree program. There are two subtypes of Instructional Assistants, based upon the nature of their duties and teaching credentials.
  - a. **Teaching Assistants.** These students provide instructional or tutorial support for faculty teaching undergraduate students. Examples of Teaching Assistant duties include preparing examinations, grading assignments, conducting and assisting in preparation of lectures, leading discussion groups, maintaining class records, providing laboratory instruction, and tutoring students outside of formal lecture and laboratory classes. A Teaching Assistant is neither the instructor of record nor responsible for assigning course grades.
  - b. **Teaching Associates.** These students provide instruction to undergraduate students and are instructor of record for undergraduate courses. Only students who have a master's degree or 18 graduate credit hours in the area of instruction are eligible to be employed in this capacity.
2. **Research Assistants.** These students provide research support and assistance for faculty researchers in fields related to the student's course of study. Work assignments should complement the degree goals, foster professional development, and expand student's research skills and knowledge in their area of study.
3. **Professional Assistant.** These students 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.
4. **Athletics Assistants.** These students provide support to the athletic department as graduate trainers, graduate coaches, or graduate departmental assistants. Work assignments must be consistent with the graduate student's career goals (i.e., as coaches, trainers, athletics administrators, etc.), regardless of the graduate student's course of study.

## **B. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP WORKLOAD.**

Graduate Assistants are expected to work 20 hours **(full-time appointment) or 10 hours (half-time appointment)** per week. The hiring department supervisor is responsible for monitoring the workload of GAs in their unit. Full workload for a Teaching Associate is based on teaching six credit hours each fall and spring term and three credit hours in the summer term. The teaching load may be adjusted for research and non-teaching duties beyond those normally expected for academic instruction. Research Assistants and Athletics Assistants may also engage in professional apprenticeship activities that align with their duties as Graduate Assistants. Professional apprenticeships are to be agreed upon in advance between the supervisor and the graduate student; such apprenticeship activities may extend the graduate student's time commitments beyond those involved with the Graduate Assistantship (i.e., 20 hours full-time or 10 hours half-time). Such professional apprenticeship activities are not compensated by the university, as they are voluntary and provided for the purpose of assisting the graduate student in reaching her/his career goals.

## **C. LENGTH AND HOURS OF APPOINTMENT.**

Graduate Assistants can be appointed full-time (20 hours a week) or half-time (10 hours a week). Appointments may be for an academic year, a fiscal year, or for a period of appointment (if they are to be hired for less than six months but not for a full academic semester).

## **D. LENGTH OF SERVICE.**

The length of service of a master's-level GA shall be no longer than three years and a doctoral-level GA may not hold a Graduate Assistantship for longer than five years. Any exceptions/extensions must be approved by the Director of the Graduate School.

## **E. STIPENDS.**

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, Graduate Assistants must be paid at or above minimum wage.

- a. **EXTRA COMPENSATION.** Graduate Assistants may not receive extra compensation for duties associated with the GA appointment.

## **F. TUITION REMISSION.**

Tuition remission (if applicable) is assigned a dollar-equivalent value, and is counted as a scholarship for financial aid purposes. This means that financial aid eligibility, including student loan eligibility, is reduced by the amount of the tuition waiver.

### **3. EVALUATION**

All Graduate Assistants must be evaluated at the end of each appointment by the assigned supervisor. The evaluation must be given to the GA, who has the opportunity to make corrections of fact, if necessary.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Hiring Department Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all Graduate Assistants hired meet academic and employment eligibility requirements and for monitoring that GAs maintain their workload. The unit supervisor is also responsible for making sure that all hiring forms are submitted on time to the appropriate unit for processing (e.g., Human Resources), and that timely evaluations are conducted.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Nicklow', is positioned above the typed name.

John W. Nicklow  
President  
University of New Orleans

*\*Policy Updates:  
Revisions: 2/11/2016  
3/31/2017*