

# Graduate Assistantships



All graduate assistantships are awarded each year by academic units and non-academic units on a competitive basis following a highly qualified student's nomination by their graduate program and using predetermined criteria, including but not limited to the applicant's academic record, test scores, recommendations, and other pertinent information.

What are the different types of positions available?

## **Graduate Administrative Assistant (GAA)**

Students in this role assist in a program or non-academic unit that requires graduate-level knowledge, skills, and dispositions. GAAs assist faculty, departments, or other units in various activities that develop transferable skills that help students get ready for professional life such as skills in communication, teamwork, time management, organization, and technology.

## **Graduate Lab Assistant (GLA)**

Students holding GLA appointments may not have primary responsibility for a course. Still, they may assist in laboratory sessions, prepare lectures, grade papers, keep class records, conduct discussion groups and tutorials, hold student conferences, or help the course instructor in other ways. GLA's do not need to meet the 18 credit hour requirement and are under the professor of record's direct supervision. The department chair or division director shall determine that a student's credentials qualify the individual to undertake the work assignment.

## **Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)**

The duties assigned for Graduate Research Assistantships should be relevant and add value to the student's major field of study, area of interest or expertise. The research is usually a component of the faculty advisor's research. GRAs are generally expected to carry out a specific research project that often forms the basis for a thesis or dissertation.

General duties include:

- Performing experiments, calculations, and analyzing the results and disseminating new knowledge orally or in written publications
- Reflecting on the state of the field and proposing new research problems
- Attending conferences to present results and collaborate with other researchers
- Training and supervising less experienced research personnel

## **Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)**

Students in this role are involved in instruction, usually of undergraduates. Qualified GTAs perform instructional duties in an area of their expertise, most often within their home departments, although qualified GTAs may perform teaching

duties outside their departments. Students appointed as a GTA must have a baccalaureate degree and be enrolled in a graduate program.

**GTAs who are primarily responsible for teaching a course for credit and assigning final grades for such a course must have earned at least 18 credit hours of graduate coursework in the teaching discipline before their appointment, be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training, and be evaluated regularly. The "Faculty Qualifications Recommendation" form (located under Forms on MyCSU) needs to be completed and approved by the Provost's Office before the appointment of a GTA.**

All GTAs must complete D2L training for course delivery provided by the [Center of Online Learning](#) at CSU. The hiring supervisor should reach out to the Center to arrange training for the GTA.

### Doctoral Fellows

Doctoral fellows will typically be assigned responsibilities that overlap those of Graduate Research Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants. They are frequently engaged in research and may be assigned to work with one or more faculty members in the program.

What are the eligibility requirements to hold a graduate assistantship position?

- The student must be fully accepted as "**Regular**" in an approved graduate degree, diploma, or certificate program at CSU. Students classified as "Provisional" or "Non-Degree" or on Probation are not eligible for an assistantship.
- Students must be enrolled in at least six graduate credit hours in the semester in which they serve as a graduate assistant.
- For the second-year student, satisfactory progress toward the degree must be evidenced by completing a minimum of 12-18 graduate semester hours with at **least a 3.0 cumulative graduate grade-point average** in his/her current degree program. Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA's), who will have the primary responsibility of teaching a course and assigning final grades, must have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline.
- Students must be eligible to work in the United States and cannot exceed any hourly limitations placed on them by a visa.

What are the benefits of an Assistantship?

Stipend

- Graduate Assistants will receive a stipend. All Graduate Assistantship appointments must meet the minimum wage hourly pay. Graduate Assistantship stipend amounts may vary by department, work expectations, and funding source. Stipends are taxed.

Tuition Waivers

- Graduate Assistants pay a special tuition rate of \$25 per semester as mandated by BOR policy.
- What's NOT Covered by the Tuition Waiver: The cost of health insurance and all other University fees.

Mandatory Health Insurance

- All graduate assistants are required to have health insurance. United Healthcare provides health insurance through the University System of Georgia Student Health Insurance Program. All Graduate Assistants must apply for health insurance through the United Healthcare website.
- Graduate Assistants who already have their own health insurance may apply for a waiver of the mandatory student health insurance through [Health Services/United Healthcare website](#). Select "Waive Online." Proof of insurance must be provided each semester.

How do I find a Graduate Assistant position?

Option 1 - Review the Graduate Assistantship Job Postings on the [HR website](#).

- Use your password and ID to login and register on the HR website
- Apply for the Job

Option 2 -Contact your academic department to learn about available GA opportunities.

- Your program coordinator or department chair may be able to match you with faculty who are seeking a graduate assistant.

What are the hiring procedures?

- Typically, department representatives will interview applicants for the graduate assistant positions. Be sure to discuss the following, so you have a clear understanding of the expectations of the job: 1) What the project or job entails; 2) what are the expectations, tasks, and duties; 3) how often you will meet with your supervisor, and 4) how you will be assessed or evaluated.
- The hiring supervisor will submit the paperwork notifying Human Resources of the candidate for the position. Human Resources will help you through the paperwork once you have been offered a position.
- A background check is required, and a GA cannot begin work until the background check is complete. The background check process can take up to two weeks, so it is important to respond promptly to all action items to ensure timely hiring.

What are the duties and responsibilities of a graduate assistant?

- A graduate assistant works nineteen (19) hours per week. Partial assistantships with half tuition waivers require 10 hours per week and must be approved by the Office of the Provost.
- The employing department supervisor sets the student's schedule.
- The employing department will provide specific duties and responsibilities.
- Graduate assistants will accurately report the number of hours worked each week.

[Graduate Assistant Handbook](#)

[Graduate Assistant Job Postings](#)

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## Graduate Assistant FAQs

What is the deadline for hiring a Graduate Assistant?

Fall Semester - August 31

Spring Semester - January 31

Can a student be admitted as a non-degree student and receive a graduate assistantship?

Students classified as “non-degree” are not eligible for an assistantship.

Can a student who is classified as provisional receive a graduate assistantship?

Students classified as “provisional” are not eligible for an assistantship.

Can a student who is on probation receive a graduate assistantship?

Students who are on probation are not eligible for an assistantship.

In how many hours must graduate assistants be enrolled?

The graduate assistant is expected to enroll and earn credit for a minimum of six (6) graduate semester hours each term in which the assistantship is held; an academic load of more than 10 hours must be approved by the appropriate dean and the graduate director. Graduate assistantships during the summer term will require enrollment for a minimum of six (6) graduate semester hours.

What if I become sick and miss work or take a vacation?

No annual or sick leave is accrued. Graduate Assistants do not earn sick or vacation hours, please consult with your department/school/office concerning their policies. Most often GAs make up the work hours they miss.

Do graduate assistants have to work over holidays and breaks?

No. When the university is closed for classes, graduate assistants are not required to work.

What happens if I don't start my assistantship at the beginning of the semester?

If the student is hired late, the employing department will decide whether to offer a reduced stipend.

How many graduate hours does a graduate assistant have to take in the summer?

A minimum of 6 credit hours.

How many credit hours must a part-time graduate assistant be enrolled to be eligible to hold a Graduate Assistantship?

Graduate assistants must meet a part-time enrollment minimum requirement of 6 credit hours per academic term.

Can I register for an undergraduate course and have the tuition paid?

Yes. Some graduate programs include requirements for undergraduate hours. Students who enroll in undergraduate courses as electives should ensure that this does not jeopardize any financial aid they might be receiving.

Is a graduate assistant allowed to work outside of the University?

Yes, as long as they are able to fulfill the required hours for the graduate assistantship, meet the performance standards set by the supervisor/department, and maintain the required 3.0 GPA.

What is the stipend amount for a graduate assistant?

Pay rates may vary by student experience, funding source, discipline, and responsibilities specific to the appointment. For each term, Fall and Spring, Graduate Assistants are to be paid a minimum of \$2,100 per term. Because the summer term is shorter and GAs may work a variable number of weeks, the GA stipend should generally be at the same rate of pay rather than the same total pay for the term.

When do graduate assistants get paid?

Payment is made monthly. In summer, GAs are paid at the end of June and end of July.

Does the graduate assistant have to pay taxes on the stipend?

Yes, all compensation paid is subject to local, state, and federal taxes.

What tuition must be paid by a graduate assistant?

The graduate assistantship program allows full-time graduate assistants to pay a flat, per-semester tuition rate of \$25.00. Students who have part-time assistantships (1/2 time) must pay for half of their tuition. The student also pays the various fees as presented in CSU's fee schedule.

How does a graduate assistant resign from a position?

A graduate assistant choosing to resign or terminate his/her employment must submit a letter of resignation to the departmental supervisor. A termination Personnel Action Request form must be submitted to Human Resources by the supervisor to avoid overpayment.

What is the length of appointments?

A graduate student may be appointed as a graduate assistant for up to two semesters (Fall and Spring), or on a semester by semester basis.

Are graduate assistants eligible for employee benefits?

Graduate assistantships are considered part-time employees; therefore, they are ineligible for employment benefits.

Do graduate assistantships require health insurance?

Yes. Graduate assistantships require students to enroll in the USG mandatory Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). Students with eligible alternative insurance may apply for a waiver. Information about SHIP and the waiver process is available at [Student Health Insurance Program \(SHIP\)](#). Please note that the waiver deadline is typically at the end of the first week of the semester; therefore, it is strongly recommended that GA appointments be finalized by that time.

Can a graduate assistantship be terminated?

Yes. Students who do not meet the academic requirements or the requirements of the job may be terminated. Failure to perform satisfactorily the duties assigned by the supervisor could result in the termination of the assistantship. If a student's grade point average falls below 3.0 (academic probation) but remains high enough to return to 3.0 or better in the following semester, the student will have one semester to improve and return to good academic standing before the assistantship is terminated. Should a student fail to return to good academic standing after one semester, or should a student receive academic exclusion and be dismissed from the degree program, the assistantship would be terminated at once. A termination Personnel Action Request form must be submitted to Human Resources by the supervisor to avoid overpayment. Compensation will cease upon termination of the contract.

Can a student hold a graduate assistantship during the same term he or she is enrolled in an internship required by the program of study?

Graduate assistants are allowed to work outside of the university, as long as they are able to fulfill the required hours for the graduate assistantship, meet the performance standards set by the supervisor/department, and maintain the required overall GPA of 3.0 or higher.