

Graduate Assistantships

Original Implementation: Unpublished

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Stephen F. Austin State University offers four types of graduate assistantships (GAs):

Teaching Assistantship - A Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) works with students in a specific course or laboratory to provide support for the faculty member in charge, and, in some cases, to teach the course as the primary instructor, under the guidance of a faculty member.

Research Assistantship - A Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) is normally employed by the principal investigator of a funded research project or may be employed by a department in the pursuit of its broader research mission. The GRA will be assigned a range of duties, such as library searches, fieldwork, laboratory experiments, and preparation of reports. Work on a research project often leads to a thesis or dissertation, or a professional presentation or publication, and provides long-range direction for the student's development as a scholar.

Administrative Assistantship - A Graduate Administrative Assistant (GAA) works with the administrative staff of a department, college, or campus office primarily in gathering, organizing, and analyzing information. The duties should be more advanced than those performed by undergraduate student assistants.

Graduate Teaching Fellow – A Graduate Teaching Fellow (GTF) provides instruction to students in a specific course or laboratory with mentorship from a faculty member. The GTF is an advanced graduate student who has completed a minimum of 18 graduate semester credit hours in the subject area and has at least one semester experience as a GTA. The GTF will have completed their work as a GTA with good student evaluation ratings.

To be eligible for a GA, a student must have clear or provisional admission to the graduate school and the academic unit, and be in good academic standing. GAs assigned at the 50% rate (50% = full GA) are obligated to the academic unit to which they are assigned for approximately 320 hours per semester or twenty (20) clock hours per week. Those assigned to other percentages are obligated for a proportionate number of clock hours. GA work times and schedules are determined by the needs of the academic unit or department. The academic unit or department head is responsible for the selection, training, assignment of duties, and supervision of the GAs.

A GA must be enrolled for at least six semester credit hours (SCH) of graduate courses in a fall or spring semester, or three SCH in the summer. Should a GA fall below the required SCH minimum, the GA will not be eligible for an assistantship the following semester.

A GA who receives veteran's benefits or other resources may be required to take nine hours in a fall or spring semester in order to receive the additional benefits. A student eligible for additional benefits should consult the source of the additional funding to determine the number of hours he/she must be enrolled to receive the benefits.

A student must be approved for an assistantship by the academic unit head, dean, director of human resources, and dean of the office of research and graduate studies (ORGS). The compensation for an assistantship should follow the guidelines established by the dean of ORGS. Appointment as a GA requires a clear background check and is completed only after the candidate has attended a mandatory new employee orientation session in the Department of Human Resources. All GAs must also complete an online GA Orientation module which is maintained by ORGS within their first month of employment. Except for students in the Ed.D., Ph.D. and M.F.A. programs, or externally funded grant programs, a student normally may receive an assistantship for no more than four long semesters and two full summers.

Cross Reference: Graduate Bulletin

Responsible for Implementation: Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Contact for Revision: Dean of Research and Graduate Studies

Forms: Application Form for Graduate Assistantships (available on the ORGS website and from the office of the academic unit head)

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Revision History: April 18, 2020
July 25, 2017
November 7, 2016
July 29, 2014
April 19, 2011