



GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP INSTRUCTIONS

Graduate Education and Research
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Guidelines

Graduate Assistant assignments must be clearly related to their program of study. Graduate assistants may be used in support of research or instruction. Graduate assistants are not to be used for clerical or other general administrative duties.

Graduate assistants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 1) They must be either clearly or provisionally admitted to a master's or specialist degree program
- 2) They must be enrolled, and maintain enrollment, in a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 12 hours of graduate credit (a student may be registered for 6 hours in summer or during their final term prior to graduation)
- 3) They must meet the minimum GPA requirement of 3.0

These criteria should be verified by the program prior to submitting the GA Nomination to the Graduate School. If a student does not meet these criteria, ***their nomination will not be approved.*** This is a situation that has led to misunderstandings when a GA has assumed that their assistantship has been processed, but then does not receive a paycheck. If a Nomination is received for a student not meeting the above criteria, the department will be notified.

Additional Hours

Graduate assistants should not be employed elsewhere within the University. In cases where there are specific needs, **graduate assistants may be employed for up to an additional 7.5 hours per week above their assistantship.** The additional 7.5-hour limit is for ALL assignments, including part-time instruction. Requests for additional employment must be approved in advance by the Graduate Dean by filling out a Request for Additional Employment form found on the Grad School website.

Increased Stipends

Beginning Fall 2007, **Graduate Assistantship Stipends were increased to \$5,000** per semester. This means EKU now has the highest GA stipend in the state. Part of the requirements for being a GA is that the position must strictly pertain to the student's educational program and the Graduate School will be persistently enforcing this rule. The new electronic Graduate Assistantship Nomination form (expounded upon later) will contain a field for hiring managers to stipulate how the position will apply to the student's education. The Graduate Office will be closely monitoring these explanations and any not pertaining to the student's educational program will be disapproved.

Departmental Stipend Increases

GA stipends have been increased from \$3250 per semester to \$5000 per semester for full-time (20 hours/week) positions. The \$5000 is the minimum a student may be paid per semester for a full-time position. If a department wishes, it may pay a student additional funds with its own org code. To be fair to all students, the Graduate School asks that additional stipend increases by the department do not exceed \$1000 per semester for full-time positions. Any increases exceeding this amount will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Student assignments may only be **10 hours** (at \$2500/semester) or **20 hours** (at \$5000/semester) per week positions; **they may not be further divided**.

Summer GA

The Graduate School does not fund GA positions in the summer. Any department who wishes to hire GA for the summer semesters must pay for them out of the department's account. A department may have as many GA as it wants as long as it is paying for them. A typical fall/spring semester is about 16 weeks.

This works out to roughly \$312.50 per week based on the \$5000 per semester stipend. For the shorter summer semester, a fair stipend is \$3125 for the entire semester (312.50 x 10 weeks). This is the minimum amount a student should be paid for working the entire summer semester. A department may pay the student up to \$1000 more than that. Stipends exceeding this amount will be considered on a case-by-case basis

GA Nomination Process

In effort to streamline the process, two electronic systems have been developed. The first is the Human Resources Employment site. This will allow departments to post available Assistantships for students to search and apply directly to them. ***Graduate Assistant Applications will no longer be sent to the Graduate School.***

There is also a check box on both the paper and online Graduate School Application with which students can indicate their interest in an Assistantship. Since the information required on the Assistantship Application is the same as on a Graduate School Application, this simplifies the process to by combining them.

For those students who still need to fill out a separate GA Application, there is a form on the Graduate School's website for them to fill out and send directly **to the department they wish it work for**. The departments can contact the students they want to hire and then fill out the Graduate School's **electronic Graduate Assistant Nomination Form**.

The two steps to hiring a GA are:

- 1. All NEW GA Positions must be posted through the HR Online Employment System.**

Posting the position in the online system provides a position number and background information on candidates applying for the position. This process

expedites the background check and activates the student in payroll for the semester. Students whose GA positions are being renewed without changes do not have to go through the HR process again as long as there has not been a lapse in their employment. Questions regarding this system should be directed to HR.

The Human Resources site can also be used as an advertising tool for departments looking for GA. All students will be advised that available positions will be posted to the university's employment website. Any department in need of GA can post their available positions and review the student's applications for selection of the appropriate candidate.

2. **There MUST be a Nomination Form submitted electronically for each student for each semester.** This Nomination form must be approved by the Graduate School before the student can be added to payroll.

The HR Online Employment System *does not* need to be completed before submitting an electronic Nomination for your students. Human Resources is the final destination for all GA information. **Once you determine who you are going to hire: post the position via the HR system, have the student "apply" to it, and fill out an electronic Nomination form via the link below.** Once the student's nomination has been approved by the authorizing parties and the Graduate School, it will be automatically forwarded to HR.

HR will match these nominations to the electronic applications in their system and then add the students to payroll. **Human Resources will not process a GA without both pieces of the process.** Hiring managers can log into their GA account at any time to view their pending nominations and see where the nomination is in the process and who has approved it so far. *With this system, there will no longer be questions whether a GA nomination has been approved or where it is in the approval process.*

This web form for nominating Graduate Assistants is the second of the new electronic systems designed to facilitate the process. It is the same as the previous paper form, but instead of the hiring official circulating a piece of paper from office to office for authorizing signatures, the electronic system automatically sends the authorizing party an email notification. The authorizer then simply logs into the Grad School website and electronically signs off on the nomination forms. **The authorizers do not need to receive the email notifications in order to log into the system and approve nominations.** The email simply serves as notification that a nomination is awaiting approval.

Once approved by the department, the college, and the Grad School, Human Resources is automatically notified that the nomination has been approved and is waiting for processing. Human Resources will then process the application, enter the request into payroll, and electronically sign off on the nomination form. At this point, the nomination will show “Approved” in the system. Not only does this system eliminate the potential for papers being lost in circulation, but *anyone who is an authorized user can log in and view the status of their nominated students.*

New GA Information Network User

Visit www.gradschool.eku.edu/news/ga to obtain a User Registration form. This form is required due to the use of electronic signatures within the system and to set up the approval process.

New users will typically be set up within a day or two of submitting their registration forms. The user login ID is the user’s EKU email without the “@eku.edu” all lowercase letters (firstname.lastname). Everyone is set up with a temporary password to start. This password can be obtained by clicking on the “forgot password” link at the bottom of the login screen and entering the user ID. The system will then send the password in an email to that user ID.

Any time the task of nominating GA changes hands the Graduate School must be notified so that the user information can be updated in the system.

To check the status of a student's nomination:

Log into the GA website and click on "View by Term." This will display a list of all students nominated by your department. The column titled "Status" indicates whether the student has been fully processed. When Human Resources has completed the students' files and added them to payroll their status will show "approved" in this column.

If the student's status is "pending" click on the student's nomination link and scroll to the bottom of the page. At the bottom of the page is the list of people who are processing the nomination beginning with the person who submitted it. As the nomination passes through the approval process, each person's name with the date and time they "signed" the nomination is listed. This allows anyone with access to view whose approval is needed for the nomination to advance to HR.

GA Nominations **must** be renewed **every** semester. Hiring managers must login and click "Renew" on any returning GA. Every GA must be renewed each semester.

GA Termination

If at any time during the semester the student's GPA falls below the mandatory 3.0, the student is no longer enrolled in 9-12 hours, the department does not feel the student is fulfilling his/her duties, or the student chooses to discontinue his/her appointment, the contract must be terminated. **If either a student or a department chooses to cancel a contract, the Graduate School must be promptly notified.**

Students in their final semester:

If a student is in his/her last semester and only has 3-6 credit hours left to graduate, but still plan on working as a GA, the hiring department must contact the Graduate School. **Any students not registered 9-12 hours will not be approved for a GA.** Without notification, the Graduate School will not know that

the reason the student is registered for fewer than the required hours is because they are in their last semester. Please send a notice to nikki.kowalski@eku.edu if the student being nominated is in his/her last semester and will be registered for fewer than the required number of credit hours.

Assistantship Application Steps

1. Graduate Assistantship positions are at the discretion of the college departments. Students searching for an assistantship should contact their advisors and their departments for information on available positions. Departments can also post available positions on **EKU's employment website**.
2. Students can search the postings by going to the "Employment" homepage and clicking on "Job Seekers." They can then **apply directly to the position via the website**.
3. Once a department chooses to hire a student for an Assistantship, the department hiring manager will fill out an **electronic Nomination form** for that student.
4. The nomination must be approved by the authorizing parties and the Graduate School, then be processed by Human Resources and added to payroll. At any point in the process the student can have his or her hiring manager **check the status of their nomination by logging into the Grad School's website**.
5. Once the student has been approved, the Graduate School will generate and send to the student a contract stipulating the terms of their Assistantship.