

# Graduate Assistants

Policy Number

5120

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01/26/2021

Executive Responsibility

Dean of Graduate School

Graduate Council

Functional Responsibility

Faculty Senate

## 5120.1 Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships combine an educational experience and a financial support package for full-time graduate students, whose primary occupation is the pursuit of their degrees, and include tuition remission and a minimum stipend. Assistantship duties should be related to the students degree program, and the experience should advance the student's educational objectives. Assistantships are overseen by faculty members and support primarily academic goals. Graduate Assistantships are distinct from scholarships or student employment.

## 5120.2 Periods of Appointment

Graduate assistants supported in whole or in part by Wright State University typically receive appointments for two semesters beginning in the Fall. If funds are available, and agreement may be issued to the student for the summer term at the same per-term stipend as the assistant received during the previous academic year. Periods of appointment extend from the beginning of the first full month of the academic term to the end of its last month as follows:

<b>Semester</b>	<b>Full Term</b>	<b>A Term</b>	<b>B Term</b>
Fall	Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.	N/A	N/A
Spring	Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr.	N/A	N/A
Summer	May, June, July, August	May, June	June, July

Graduate assistants are actively appointed for the entirety of every calendar month covered by the assistantship agreement, and the per-semester stipend is paid in equal monthly installments. Graduate assistantship support may be provided for up to a maximum of two years from master's students and additionally, up to five years of assistantship may be provided for doctoral students. To receive continued support, assistants must meet requirements for satisfactory progress per 5120.5 below.

Continued support of a graduate assistant beyond the normal period requires special approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

## 5120.3 Stipends

There are minimum stipend amounts for an academic year (eight-month) appointment for graduate assistants (current rates are listed at <https://www.wright.edu/graduate-school/ga-agreement-procedures>). Higher stipend levels paid by WSU funds may be granted with the approval of the appropriate college/school dean and the Graduate School. Higher stipend levels paid from external grants and contracts may be granted as indicated in a budget approved by the external sponsor. Funds for all stipends will be contained within the sponsoring college/school budget or an externally funded WSU account.

The stipend is subject to all appropriate withholding taxes.

## 5120.4 Tuition Remission

Students under an assistantship agreement are eligible to be awarded tuition remission for all instructional fees (not including laboratory or other program fees) up to a maximum number of credit hours specified in the assistantship agreement.

Tuition remissions are not authorized for audited courses. Tuition remissions are not authorized for undergraduate courses unless the courses are recommended by the graduate program and are directly germane to the assistants' courses of study. Students who had assistantship agreements for the preceding academic year (Fall through Spring) may be authorized, contingent upon availability of funds, a Summer Term tuition remission with no service required during the Summer Term. Students who have completed their graduate degree program of study are not authorized a Summer Term tuition remission. Graduate assistants not completing the terms of their assistantship agreements in a given academic term may be required to reimburse the university for part or all of the tuition that was remitted. In addition, a graduate assistant dropping a course(s) after the refund date, without permission of the department/program and the Graduate School, is subject to reimbursing the University for the fees that were remitted for the dropped course(s).

**Graduate assistant credit hours covered by tuition remission will be accounted at the resident tuition rate, regardless of the assistant's residency status.**

Each assistantship agreement shall specify a maximum number of credit hours covered by tuition remission. If an agreement fails to specify a maximum number of credit hours, then the agreement will cover only the minimum number of credit hours required for full-time graduate student status.

Funds for all tuition remissions will be contained within the sponsoring college/school budget or an externally or separately funded account. Tuition will be applied electronically once the student is registered. The tuition covered by tuition remission shall be clearly noted in student billing statements.

Graduate assistants who register for credit hours beyond the maximum number indicated as eligible for tuition remission in their contract shall be charged the tuition applicable to their residency status for each credit hour beyond the maximum number covered by the assistantship agreement.

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## 5120.5 Requirements for Satisfactory Progress

Graduate assistants (GAs), graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), and graduate research assistants (GRAs) must perform satisfactorily in both degree requirements and their assistantship duties. Satisfactory progress toward a degree means at least the following:

- Full-time registration status (at least six semester hours) for students who have six or more hours of remaining course work;
- Registration for the specific hours indicated on an approved program of study for students who either
  - a) have fewer than six hours of remaining course work to complete or
  - b) have completed all course requirements and are completing remaining degree requirements;
- A cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0;
- Adherence to an approved program of study and fulfilment of other academic requirements as determined by the program.

However, individual departments and/or programs may establish a higher minimum. Failure to meet these standards, or failure to perform satisfactorily as a graduate assistant, will be grounds for cancellation of the assistantship agreement

Full-time assistants normally devote a minimum of 20 hours per week to assistantship duties (for the purpose of assistantships, an assignment of twenty hours of duties per week is considered a full-time appointment). The supervising unit should specify any other conditions including specific duties, hours during which those duties should be performed, expectations between academic terms, and the individual supervisor to whom the assistant will report. Such conditions should be stated in writing within the Graduate Student Assistantship Agreement.

## 5120.6 Hour Limit

Assistantship duties may cover a maximum of 28 hours per week for domestic students. International students who are graduate assistants are permitted by the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to perform associated duties for no more than 20 hours per week during an academic term. Full-time assistants, domestic and international, normally devote a minimum of 20 hours per week to assistantship duties.

## 5120.7 Concurrent Appointments

Students may NOT hold concurrent active appointments with the Graduate School and the Office of Student Employment.

Students may have only one assistantship agreement at a time.

No supplemental agreements will be accepted.

Superseding agreements may be submitted at any time during the semester.

## 5120.8 Oral English Proficiency Test

Because Ohio Law requires that all teaching assistants who provide classroom instruction to students be orally proficient in English (ORC 3345.281), all WSU graduate assistants who have teaching responsibilities (including graduate assistants and graduate research assistants who provide instructional or other direct-contact student services in either the classroom or laboratory) must establish that they are proficient in spoken English before they will be allowed to sign their assistantship agreements. Oral proficiency in English may be established either by a confirmed citizenship of a country where English is the primary language

- a. current list is published at <https://www.wright.edu/graduate-school/academics/english-official-language>) and demonstrated proficiency during a brief oral interview with the university representative overseeing the signing of the assistantship agreement, or
- b. a score of at least 250 (Category 1) on Wright State's Oral English Proficiency Test (OEP), administered by Wright State's Department of English Language and Literatures.

Students with an OEP score of 210 to 249 (Category 2) will be allowed to teach if they are supervised by a department advisor and simultaneously enrolled in the International Teaching Assistants' Workshop. Students who score 209 or less (Category 3) will not be authorized to teach and may take the OEP only once per term, and must wait at least five weeks between testing dates. Students should contact the Department of English Language and Literatures for OEP information and registration. Students will be required to provide positive identification (including a picture I.D.) to register and to take the OEP. If possible, the OEP should be completed no later than the end of the term preceding the intended assumption of assistantship duties. Results of testing administered between terms or during the term in which teaching duties actually begin may not be available in time for the assistantship agreement to be processed. The English Department will report OEP results directly to the Graduate School, which will promptly provide the results to the appropriate academic programs and students.

## 5120.9 Off-Campus Employment

Graduate assistants must abide by the policies of the employing program or department regarding off-campus employment. Generally, to hold off-campus employment, a graduate assistant must have written permission from the program or department sponsoring the assistantship.

In addition to meeting the criteria above, international students who are graduate assistants must gain approval from the United State Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) before

accepting off-campus employment. Questions concerning off-campus employment should be addressed to the University Center for International Education.

## **5120.10 Application Procedures for Graduate Assistantships**

Assistantships are available in a variety of supervising units (departments, programs, and some administrative offices). Students should contact the supervising units in which they would like to hold assistantships to request applications and discuss opportunities.

The application and contract process is outlined in the [Graduate Assistantship Agreement Procedures](#).

## **5120.11 Students' Responsibilities for Assistantship Processing**

- A. International students who have been granted a graduate teaching assistantship, and who do not have a previous degree earned in a country where English is the official language of instruction in higher education (a current list of which is published at <https://www.wright.edu/graduate-school/academics/english-official-language>), must meet the requirements detailed above in 5120.8.
- B. International students with F-1 or J-1 visas wishing to be approved for assistantship duties must follow the process described in the [Graduate Assistantship Agreement Procedures](#) document.
- C. All students must contact the Graduate School in order to finalize the assistantship agreement after they have been notified that the assistantship agreement is ready for final processing. Further details regarding this process may be found in the [Graduate Assistantship Agreement Procedures](#) document.
- D. All students must be registered for the appropriate number of hours each term before tuition can be applied to the student's bursar account.

## **5120.12 Continuing Assistantships**

- A. Supervising units desiring to retain the same student graduate assistant for a subsequent appointment period must send a new assistantship agreement to the Graduate School covering the new appointment period.
- B. If a graduate assistant wishes to continue as a graduate assistant but in a different supervising unit, he/she must be appointed by that new supervising unit, which must send a new assistantship agreement to the Graduate School covering the new appointment period.

## **5120.13 Graduate Assistant Evaluation**

Supervising units are responsible for evaluating the performance of all graduate assistants' duties. Supervisors should complete the evaluations each academic term, or upon termination of the assistantship agreements, and should submit them to the Department Chair/Program Director at the end of the term or upon termination of the assistantship agreements.