



# **GRADUATE ASSISTANT HANDBOOK**

## **Preface**

This document is a supplement to current departmental training programs for Graduate Teaching, Research, and Administrative Assistants and is a means of preparing assistants for common situations and responsibilities they may encounter during their appointment. Many of the items addressed in this document were selected because of their applicability to assistantship positions in any department. This document is not intended to be exhaustive and should be supplemented as needed. The staff of the Graduate School is also available to provide assistance at any time. Please call (extension 2336) whenever you have questions.

An online version of the Graduate Assistant Handbook can be found at the Graduate School web page at <https://graduate.utulsa.edu/about/publications/#general-interest-graduate-publications>. This online version will be modified as policies, procedures, and forms are changed.



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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

This handbook contains information regarding policies and procedures affecting Graduate Teaching Assistants (TA), Graduate Departmental Assistants (DA), Graduate Research Assistants (RA), and Graduate Administrative Assistants (AA). Fellowships that do not have work requirements are not covered in this document. If you have questions concerning assistantships or fellowships, please contact your faculty advisor, your departmental chairperson, or the Graduate School office (Lorton Hall 201, 918-631-2336).

The University of Tulsa provides assistantship opportunities to graduate students to assist qualified students to pursue graduate degrees, to recognize and support scholarship and professional development, to extend the range of academic experiences and to assist departments, offices, and faculty in carrying out their academic and professional responsibilities. Graduate Assistants may be supported by University funds or external funds administered through the University. Graduate Assistants have varied duties, which may include teaching responsibilities (lecturing, preparing classroom materials, assisting in laboratories, grading, etc.), research responsibilities, as well as professional development opportunities in administrative offices and departments.

Graduate Assistants must juggle a number of related responsibilities. At the same time that they are pursuing their own degrees, they also function as instructors, tutors, researchers, or departmental or office assistants. In addition, many graduate students have family and civic responsibilities. In many ways, the time management problems faced by graduate students are the same as those faced by university faculty and professionals in many disciplines. In these cases, time management and planning are essential; setting goals and ordering priorities are crucial. Above all, graduate assistants must plan and manage their time so that they are able to perform their duties as Graduate Assistants while remaining focused on their academic goal of degree completion. The Graduate School restriction permitting Graduate Assistants to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year is designed to assist graduate students in managing their time and completing their degree program in a timely fashion.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be eligible to receive an assistantship, a graduate student must be admitted to a degree-seeking graduate program, be in good academic standing, and must be a full-time student. Students on probation or attending TU part-time are not eligible for an assistantship.

Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative graduate grade point average and be on track to successfully complete their degree program as a full-time student. Full-time enrollment is defined as nine credit hours per semester. Enrollment in zero to eight credit hours is acceptable for full-time status for two sequential regular semesters in a master's program or four sequential regular semesters in a doctoral program when the student has completed at least nine credit hours per semester for the prior two sequential regular semesters. These reduced-credit-hour semesters are to be the final semesters in a student's degree program.

Applicants for TA, DA, RA, and AA positions must also meet any eligibility requirements of the specific appointment and perform their graduate assistantship duties satisfactorily, as defined by their immediate supervisor or department. These requirements include maintaining appropriate standards of academic and professional conduct and honoring all terms of the assistantship contract. Graduate students who are involved in academic or professional misconduct either as a student or in their assistantship duties, or who are otherwise involved in conduct that undermines the integrity of The University of Tulsa, are subject to sanctions that could include immediate termination of the assistantship and dismissal from the Graduate School.

Applicants for a Graduate Assistantship will not be subjected to unlawful harassment or discriminatory treatment. University educational employment policy states that there will be no discrimination against persons because of ethnicity, religion, age, creed, color, gender, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veterans' status, or political beliefs or affiliations.

## SOURCES FOR ASSISTANTSHIPS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE

There are four potential sources of funding for assistantships: the Graduate School, academic colleges, academic or administrative departments, and externally-funded research grants and contracts.

Reappointment to an assistantship is **NOT** automatic. Reappointment is common, but not guaranteed, and requires satisfactory job performance, full-time enrollment status, and a minimum 3.0 grade point average.

TA and DA appointments are processed by the department chairperson or graduate program advisor and require the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. RA appointments are initiated by the research supervisor and generally require the approval of the Dean of the college in which the instruction occurs, the Research Office Coordinator assigned to handle the research account, and the Dean of the Graduate School. AA appointments are initiated by the administrative department and require the approval of the department supervisor and the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean or Associate Dean of the Graduate School reviews all appointments prior to the creation of an official award notification.

The assistantship acceptance form is a contract between the University and the student and must be completed and submitted to the Graduate School to show that the award has been accepted. **Students who do not submit their assistantship acceptance form should expect to receive bills for tuition until the form is returned to the Graduate School.**

For fall awards, awardees have until April 15<sup>th</sup> or two weeks from the date they receive the award to accept the assistantship. This is consistent with the Council of Graduate Schools "Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants" to which the University adheres, and which recognizes April 15<sup>th</sup> as the deadline for accepting offers of financial assistance.

## EMPLOYMENT RULES AND HELPFUL HINTS

### *Outside Employment Policy for Graduate Assistants*

The University of Tulsa considers that a full-time graduate student receiving a 20 hour per week graduate assistantship has a full-time commitment. Any employment in addition to the assistantship is specifically prohibited. A violation of this policy may result in the immediate termination of the assistantship. Any request for an exception to this policy must be submitted in writing to the Graduate Program Advisor and must receive the approval of the Graduate Program Advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School. The supervisor of the graduate assistant should also be informed of the request to work additional hours beyond the assistantship.

International students holding full-time graduate assistantships (20 hours per week) may not accept any other employment, either in or outside the University. Failure to follow this federal requirement can result in substantial penalties for the international student.

### *Employment Eligibility in the United States*

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires all employers to verify employment eligibility of anyone hired after November 6, 1986. Graduate Assistants at The University of Tulsa are required to complete Section 1 of the enclosed I-9 Form. Instructions are included on the back of the form.

The I-9 Form should be brought in person, with Section 1 completed, to the Payroll Office before the end of the third day of work. The student should bring all documents necessary to establish their identity and their eligibility to work so that TU may complete Section 2 of the form.

**It is absolutely essential that the I-9 Form be filed in the Payroll Office by the end of the student's third working day.** If the student lacks some of the documentation required to allow TU to complete Section 2, they must bring the form to the Payroll Office with a receipt showing that they have applied for the missing

document(s). Graduate Assistants must then produce the required document(s) within two weeks of when they begin work.

### ***Payroll Facts***

Normally, students begin performing duties associated with their assistantships on August 15 and continue through May 15 of the following year. Teaching Assistants and Departmental Assistants usually receive one half of a month's check at the end of August, eight equal payments September through April, and another one half of a month's check at the end of May. Research Assistantships and Administrative Assistantships may fall within the same timeframe as most TAs/DAs or be modified based on the needs of a particular research project or office. The timeframe of any assistantship will be stated on the official award notification. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) usually treats stipends paid to Graduate Assistants as taxable income and the University is obliged to withhold income taxes. The Payroll Office will deduct appropriate federal and state income taxes.

Students on an assistantship during the summer who do not enroll during the summer will have additional taxes deducted from their stipend. Contact the Payroll Office for more information.

Students should contact the IRS directly for tax information or consult with their own tax advisers. The University of Tulsa Graduate School does not provide tax consultation.

Graduate Assistants are NOT eligible for general faculty. Although Graduate Assistants are paid for duties performed, they are not considered university employees. A graduate assistant's primary goal at the University is their education and therefore they are considered students.

### ***Customary Pay Scales for Graduate Assistants***

#### *Graduate Assistant in Master's Program:*

- at least \$13,410 stipend for two semesters
- Payment of 75% tuition for nine credit hours per semester

#### *Graduate Assistant in Doctoral Program:*

- at least \$14,360 stipend for two semesters
- Payment of tuition for nine credit hours per semester

*Departmental/Teaching Assistants:* Generally asked to teach two courses, or the equivalent in teaching-related activities, for approximately 20 hours per week. Duties vary by department, but some helpful guidelines can be found in Appendix A.

*Research Assistants:* Stipends, tuition remission, and workload vary. Salary levels typically range from \$17.00 to \$25.00 per hour, depending on individual experience and qualifications. General duties and position responsibilities are described in Appendix A.

*Administrative Assistants:* Generally asked to work approximately 20 hours per week. Duties vary by office, but some basic responsibilities and guidelines are listed in Appendix A.

### ***Student Health Insurance Coverage***

All University of Tulsa students are required to have health insurance that pays benefits in Oklahoma. The Graduate School will cover graduate students who are on a full assistantship or a full University fellowship, **who do not have health insurance**. The coverage will be the University Student Health Insurance program and is for the individual student. This is a community benefit; therefore if the student currently has health insurance for the Fall 2021 semester that pays benefits in Oklahoma, they will not be reimbursed, nor may they receive the equivalent cost of the insurance to apply to another policy with another company. In order to acquire the insurance provided with their assistantship or

fellowship, they will need to complete the Health Insurance form in Appendix B and submit it to the Graduate School before 31 August 2021.

The University charges students' accounts for the student health insurance to assure that all students have health insurance. There are two ways in which they may have this charge removed from their University account, but they must act by **31 August 2021**.

1. If they **do not** have health insurance that pays benefits in the State of Oklahoma for the 2021-2022 academic year, they need to complete and submit the health insurance form issued by the Graduate School. Only those full-time graduate assistants (a total of 20 hours of duties/week), Woobank Assistants, or full University graduate fellows (such as Bellwether Fellows and Henneke Research Fellows) who are uninsured and complete this form will receive this benefit and have the health insurance charges on their account paid by the Graduate School.
2. If they **do** have health insurance that pays benefits in the State of Oklahoma for the 2021-2022 academic year, they must submit the University of Tulsa Insurance Waiver form. They can obtain a copy of the waiver form by going to the website: [www.studentcenter.uhcsr.com/tulsa](http://www.studentcenter.uhcsr.com/tulsa).

In order to have the insurance charges removed from their account this fall semester, it is necessary for the student to complete and submit the form that is appropriate for their circumstances. We are pleased that we are able to provide this health insurance benefit to our uninsured graduate students who have a full-time assistantship or fellowship, although it does require an action on the part of the student to receive this benefit.

For more information regarding the University Student Health Insurance program, go to the website: [www.studentcenter.uhcsr.com/tulsa](http://www.studentcenter.uhcsr.com/tulsa).

### ***Direct Deposit***

Graduate Assistants are required to utilize Direct Deposit to have their monthly stipends automatically deposited into their checking or savings account. The University can deposit Graduate Assistants' payroll checks directly to their checking or savings account in almost any bank, credit union, or savings and loan association. Checks may also be deposited in multiple banks.

The procedure for enrolling in Direct Deposit:

- a. To enroll in direct deposit, complete the Direct Deposit Authorization form and attach a voided check/or deposit slip and return it to the Payroll Department in Human Resources located in Fisher Hall.
- b. You will still receive an earnings statement each month showing the same payroll information as if you received the entire check.
- c. You can change banks at any time, but it takes approximately 10 days for the banks to effect the change.
- d. Payroll checks for Graduate Assistants are released on the next to the last day of each calendar month. Funds will be in your checking or savings account by 10:00 a.m. on the last day of the month.



## **POLICY ON THE APPROPRIATE UTILIZATION OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

The Graduate Council's "Policy Statement on the Appropriate Utilization of Graduate Assistants" (March 1996) is intended to facilitate the interpretation of what constitutes appropriate graduate assistant use and responsibility for all graduate assistants at The University of Tulsa. The Dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with the collegiate deans, assumes the ultimate responsibility for interpretation and administration of the policy statement.

One consideration guiding the activities of assistants is the title and level of their assignment. For the purpose of this policy, graduate student assistants will be broadly classed as "Departmental/Teaching Assistants" (DAs/TAs) or "Research Assistants" (RAs), depending upon their major assigned responsibility and source of funding. Graduate students at TU with TAs are being funded internally with university funds while students classified as RAs are receiving external funding.

In the case of DAs, there is an internal source of funds, and the graduate students are primarily assigned to teaching functions or duties that relate to advancing the educational mission of the department. All activities directly related to the teaching function and to the satisfactory accomplishment of the teaching process are appropriate duties for the DAs. These activities include research for lecture notes, grading student performance, and other teaching-related activities for the class or classes assigned to the DA. For example, grading for the DAs assigned classes is acceptable. However, grading for a faculty member is not implied or intended unless justification for such an activity is provided by the faculty in terms of academic or professional growth on the part of the DA (i.e., conducted with the faculty in an instructional situation).

RAs are funded externally and are responsible for performing all tasks related to research for which they have primary responsibility and for which they may possibly receive credit via a single or jointly authored publication (article, presentation, thesis, etc.). When assisting faculty with research projects, activities should be beneficial in furthering the RA's knowledge of, and skills in, the research process, and/or which will enhance their understanding of the content or object of the research. Activities such as library research on the availability of source material, data collection, statistical analysis, and data processing tasks are examples of appropriate activities. Use of RAs by faculty, intended or unintended, that is of questionable value to the RA's understanding of research processes or the content being researched, and that will be primarily of personal or professional benefit to the faculty is inappropriate. For the preparation of publications or presentations of a scholarly nature, joint efforts between faculty and graduate students are encouraged. However, ethical standards of the discipline should govern the publication credits, and the majority of the RAs' activities should be of educational or professional value to the RA.

Some DAs may be assigned research responsibilities, and some RAs may be asked to perform some teaching-related tasks. The extent of each graduate assistant's responsibilities will be determined by the supervising faculty member.

Faculty members may not be aware of other duties that assistants are fulfilling for other faculty members, in cases of multiple faculty assignments. Consequently, when assistants are working with more than one faculty member, one of those faculty members or the Graduate Program Advisor should be responsible for coordinating the assistant's functions. The role of the coordinator will be to organize the functions of the assistant relative to priority and time constraints.

In all cases, the utilization of graduate student assistants should represent a balance between University, department, or faculty needs and pertinent student learning needs related to their professional academic achievements. The dual role of student and assistant should be complementary and should provide the assistants with opportunities for learning and for professional enrichment, especially if the apprenticeship is carefully and deliberately designed and effectively administered by faculty and administration.

## STUDENT RIGHTS, FREEDOMS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The University of Tulsa maintains a statement of rights, freedoms, and responsibilities, which sets forth general guidelines suggested for members of the University community. The document outlines university policy in the following areas: freedom of academic inquiry, freedom of expression, freedom of association, right to privacy, off-campus freedom, student self-government, and right of students to participate in university government and the decision-making process. More detailed information concerning any of these areas may be obtained from the Student Affairs Office, Holmes Student Center, and the current online *Student Handbook* at <http://utulsa.edu/campus-life/student-affairs/>

### ***Access to Confidential Information***

Graduate Assistants working in a variety of classrooms, research facilities, or offices across campus may have access to private and often confidential information. This information can range from part of another student's academic record or medical history to proprietary data collected as part of an ongoing research project. The University closely follows several federal regulations regarding the privacy of student information, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Graduate Assistants are required to follow these Acts, and any other university- or federally-imposed rules concerning the privacy or confidentiality of information. Adherence to these privacy and confidentiality requirements includes the time spent at work as a Graduate Assistant as well as in conversation or correspondence in any setting outside of your normal workday. Failure to follow established rules concerning private or confidential information may result in immediate termination of an assistantship. If you are unsure how to respond to a request for potentially private or confidential information, or whether information is, in fact, private or confidential, speak with your supervisor immediately.

In particular, it should be noted that FERPA regulations require that all student records be kept confidential. No student records or information concerning their content should be provided to any agent outside of The University of Tulsa without the expressed consent of a TU supervisor. Similarly, medical records should be held in strictest confidence and Graduate Assistants should not provide medical records or information regarding their content to anyone outside of the office in which they are working without their TU supervisor's permission.

All offices on campus that work with private or confidential information should have clearly articulated policies concerning your specific responsibilities when working with such information. Familiarize yourself with these policies and ask questions when you are unsure about your responsibilities.

### ***Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)***

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act sets out requirements of educational institutions designed to protect the privacy of students and their records. The act governs access to educational records maintained by educational institutions and the release of information contained in such records. The University of Tulsa policy that was written to comply with the act is on file in the Student Affairs Office, Holmes Student Center, and is printed in the current Student Handbook. Information concerning FERPA and TU's policy complying with the act is available online: <http://utulsa.edu/campus-life/student-affairs/ferpa-regulations/>

When working with student information (applications for admission or financial aid, any academic or financial documents associated with a student, among other types and forms of communication), it is always prudent to assume that the information is protected under FERPA and should not be shared. When questions arise about sharing any such information, please consult your office's policy as well as your supervisor.

### ***Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)***

This Act includes provisions to protect the privacy of individually identifiable health information. The Act governs how health care providers use and disclose personally identifiable health information about their patients, including use and disclosure for research purposes. Even those researchers who might not qualify as "covered entities" under the Act may be affected if their research protocols require the use of individually identifiable health information obtained from a health care provider who is covered.

The University reserves the right to change its practices and to make the new provisions effective for all protected health information it maintains. Any change the University makes to its privacy practices will be made available to you. Specific additional information can be found at: <https://portal.utulsa.edu>. Once you have logged in, click on offices, Human Resources and Risk Management, Policy Manual. You will then look for University Policies and choose HIPAA Compliance Policy.

Whether you are working with student health information as part of a research project or as part of your work in an on-campus office, you are required to follow all HIPAA requirements. Any questions about what types of information might be covered by HIPAA should be directed to your supervisor.

### ***General Standard of Conduct***

In keeping with the ideals and standards of higher education and the mission of The University of Tulsa, students are expected to treat one another and other members of the University community with mutual respect, dignity, honor, and trust. Specifically, students are expected to respect order, fairness, morality, and the rights of others; obey the laws of the land and the regulations, rules, and policies of the University; and conduct their activities with high regard for the ideals of higher education, which include personal honor, academic honesty, and intellectual freedom. Behavior that runs contrary to these expectations provides sufficient cause for the University to initiate disciplinary proceedings, as specified in the current *Student Handbook*.

The full text of the “General Standard of Conduct” as well as the rules and regulations governing student life and policies governing issues such as drug and alcohol use, sexual harassment, and sexual assault can be found in the current *Student Handbook*. This policy can be found at the link below.

<https://utulsa.edu/student-affairs/student-code-of-conduct/>

### ***Academic Honesty***

In keeping with the intellectual ideals, standards for community, and educational mission of the University, students are expected to adhere to all academic policies. Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty violate both individual honor and the life of the community, and may subject students to penalties ranging from failing grades to dismissal. Academic misconduct also includes unauthorized or inappropriate use of university computers, vandalism of data files or equipment, use of computer resources for personal reasons unrelated to the academic and research activities of the University, violation of proprietary agreements, theft, or tampering with the programs and data of other users. Specific policies exist in the various colleges and other campus policy guides. Graduate Students are generally covered by the Graduate Student Academic Misconduct Policy which can be found on the portal by choosing Graduate School under the heading Colleges and then clicking on the Graduate Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

### ***Ethical Conduct of Research***

As part of your enrollment process, you were asked to sign the “Academic Honesty Policy and Ethical Conduct in Academic Research and Scholarship” memorandum. In the Ethical Conduct in Research and Scholarship portion of this document, the importance of ethical conduct in research is described.

The primary way to encourage appropriate conduct in research and scholarship at the University is for faculty to promote and maintain a climate consistent with high ethical standards. To reduce the likelihood of misconduct in research and scholarship, the faculty and administration should facilitate the following:

- a. Encouragement of intellectual honesty.
- b. Assurance that quality of research, scholarship, and creative activity is emphasized.
- c. Acceptance of responsibility by the Supervisor as appropriate to the discipline.
- d. Establishment of well-defined research procedures.
- e. Appropriate assignment of credit and responsibility.

Misconduct in research and scholarship by any member of the University community is inappropriate. Allegations of misconduct in research and scholarship will be handled according to the policies and procedures included in “The University of Tulsa Research Policies, Procedures, & Guidelines,” which can be found online at

Students who hold Research Assistantships typically work with faculty on sponsored research projects. As a student scholar, you have responsibilities for the integrity of your work and responsibilities for reporting questionable research activities to appropriate University personnel. So, it is critically important that you are well informed of these issues.

The Office of Research Integrity in the US Department of Health and Human Services has a very useful website at <https://www.hhs.gov/> From this site, you can download a free copy of the book *ORI Introduction to Responsible Conduct of Research* by Nicholas Steneck (<https://ori.hhs.gov/ori-introduction-responsible-conduct-research>). In this book, the Federal Policy on Research Misconduct is defined as follows:

Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.

- **Fabrication** is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- **Plagiarism** is the appropriation of another person's ideas, process, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.
- Research misconduct does not include differences of opinion.

Other issues that are discussed at length are the Protection of Human Subjects, the Welfare of Laboratory Animals, Conflict of Interest, Data Management Practices, comments on Collaborative Research, and thoughts on Authorship and Publication. If you have questions concerning any of these areas, you are encouraged to talk to your research advisor. In particular, it can be quite valuable to have early discussions concerning authorship rights for any work in which you will be involved. If you are conducting studies that involve questionnaires or any other research involving human subjects, you will need to discuss this with your advisor and possibly with Carmen Schaar-Walden in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at TU.

If you become uncomfortable with the actions of your student colleagues or faculty mentors, or if you have complaints concerning the behavior of colleagues and/or faculty, these issues should be discussed as soon as possible with the appropriate TU personnel. In most cases, you will be able to discuss this with your work, thesis, or dissertation supervisor. Occasionally this will not be possible, in which case you should discuss the issues with another faculty member, the department chair, the Dean of your college or the Dean of the Graduate School.

In particular, if you believe that one of your colleagues or a faculty member has engaged in misconduct or a questionable practice, it is your responsibility to bring this to the attention of the appropriate faculty or administrator. The Dean of the Graduate School is always prepared to discuss your concerns regarding the ethical conduct of research.

### ***Graduate Assistant Responsibilities***

Graduate Assistants are expected to adhere to all terms of their assistantship contract as well as other appropriate university policies concerning proper conduct. This includes working the appropriate number of hours stipulated on the assistantship award and working with the Graduate Program Advisor or immediate supervisor to establish a work schedule that is acceptable to both parties. Any special needs or circumstances regarding a Graduate Assistant's ability to perform or complete assigned assistantship-related tasks should be addressed to the appropriate party as soon as possible.

In general, Graduate Assistants are expected to be professional, respectful of others, as well as helpful and welcoming to all constituents. Assistants who work with the general public, undergraduates, graduate students, or other university offices should be aware that they are ambassadors both for their office and for the University. You may be the first contact a party has with the University and the tone and appearance you convey during that contact is important. A combination of professional courtesy and common sense is appropriate and expected. This includes attire during assistantship-related activities that is neat, presentable, and appropriate for any expected as well as assigned assistantship tasks.

Most TAs and RAs offer experiences directly relevant and often necessary to graduate students' future employment in their field. Assistants in these positions should use these opportunities, within the context of their assigned tasks, to develop and refine discipline-specific skills and knowledge that will assist in their career development.

### *Assistantship Supervisor Responsibilities*

It is the responsibility of the Graduate Program Advisor or immediate supervisor to provide the graduate assistant with careful directions regarding his/her assistantship assignment and responsibilities, as well as to monitor the student's performance. Program Advisors or Supervisors are not to expect a Graduate Assistant to exceed the number of hours of work stated on the assistantship award or to ask the Assistant to perform tasks as part of an assistantship that are not appropriate. When shortcomings or weaknesses in performance are identified, the Graduate Assistant will be immediately advised and recommendations for improvement will be provided. A record of such communication should be maintained in the departmental file and a copy sent to the Graduate School.

### *Holiday Policy*

The assigned hours of work for a Graduate Assistant will be reduced proportionally during recognized holidays when the University is closed. For example, if a Graduate Assistant normally works 20 hours per week, but the University is only open three business days for one week, then the Assistant is expected to work 12 hours for that week. Further modifications in the number of hours worked during a holiday period are at the discretion of your immediate supervisor.

**Please note there are times when classes are not in session but the University is still open, such as during Spring Break, as well as a portion of Thanksgiving and Winter Break.** Do not assume that you are free from normal assistantship responsibilities just because classes are out. Check with your supervisor to see how they would like for you to handle hours during periods such as these. If the University is open, the holiday policy outlined above does not apply.

## **RESIGNATION/TERMINATION BEFORE END OF APPOINTMENT**

Graduate Assistantships are contingent upon and subject to satisfactory performance of assigned duties as determined by the assistantship contract and the assistantship Supervisor.

### *Resignation*

A Graduate Assistant may resign by voluntary, mutual written agreement between the graduate assistant and the assistantship Supervisor. Written notification must be submitted by the Graduate Assistant to the Graduate School indicating the last working day through which the Graduate Assistant is entitled to pay; this must be co-signed by the Supervisor or the Graduate Program Advisor.

### *Termination*

Appointments may be terminated for cause before their expiration under certain conditions:

1. Graduate Assistant fails to perform services satisfactorily or violates laws or University regulations.
2. Assistant violates provisions of assistantship contract.
3. Assistant fails to maintain good academic standing (3.00 minimum GPA or failure to show adequate progress towards degree completion).

Before termination for unsatisfactory work performance, Graduate Assistants must receive from their immediate Supervisors written notice of specific deficiencies in performance, as well as detailed suggestions for improvement. A copy of this notice should be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School. If unacceptable performance continues, and a decision is made to proceed with possible termination, the Supervisor will notify the Graduate Assistant and the Dean of the Graduate School of the intention to terminate the assistantship. All decisions to terminate an existing assistantship will result from mutual agreement on the part of the Supervisor and the Dean of the Graduate School.

## WORKING WITH STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROBLEMS

Many Graduate Assistantships require the graduate student to work closely with other students, typically undergraduates, on campus. These can be exciting opportunities that allow for professional growth on the part of the Assistant, but they carry with them certain responsibilities and expectations. In addition, student interactions can be problematic. Fortunately, many problems can be avoided by following a few simple principles.

### *Avoiding Student Problems*

The easiest way to avoid problems and misunderstandings as a Graduate Assistant is to always maintain a professional appearance and attitude when interacting with your students. These interactions may take place in a classroom, your office, or a social setting. Always maintain appropriate psychological and physical distance with students, including no flirting or intimate relations of any sort and being very careful when making any physical contact. Avoid personal comments, sarcasm, and any appearance of favoritism. When meeting in your office with students that you are supervising or teaching, always keep your door open. You can also review the TU Non-Fraternization Policy on the Portal by going to Offices → Human Resources and Risk Management → Policy Manual → University Policies.

TU has many students from different countries around the world with differing sets of cultural rules and expectations. A respectful understanding of these differences will help you and help your students successfully transition to an American classroom. If you have questions about a particular international student's action or behavior, please consult with your supervisor or the Center for Global Engagement.

### *Reporting and Dealing with Your Students' Problems*

Pay careful attention to your students' behavior in the classroom and any sudden or significant changes in behavior that suggest difficulties or unusual levels of stress. These can include belligerent or antisocial behavior, chronic tardiness or attendance problems, unusual changes in behaviors or mood, an abrupt change in performance level, or an inability to complete assigned work.

As a Graduate Assistant, you should report to your immediate supervisor any severe problems or activities that appear to negatively impact a student, students, or your entire classroom. Your supervisor, or the appropriate university employee, should handle severe student problems although they may request your insights and/or participation when attempting to resolve the problem. Your supervisor may recommend to the student that they seek assistance at the Alexander Health Center or Student Access.

TU has a well-defined policy concerning all forms of harassment (see pg. 16). If a student complains of being harassed in any way, report this to an appropriate TU employee immediately and encourage the student to immediately discuss it with the appropriate TU employee. This could be a faculty member, a university administrator, or the Dean of Students (Dare Chronister). If you think that you are being harassed in any way, immediately contact your assistantship supervisor, the chair of your department, or other university personnel.

### *People to Contact if You (or Your Students) Need Help*

- 1) Your supervisor
- 2) Your department chairperson
- 3) Dean of your college or the Dean of the Graduate School (ext. 2336), as appropriate
- 4) Student Access (ext. 2315)
- 5) Alexander Health Center (ext. 2241)
- 6) Matt Warren (Vice President for Risk Management, ext. 4602), to report suspected instances of harassment in the workplace
- 7) Dean of Students (ext. 2327)

## **WORKPLACE OR ACADEMIC ISSUES**

Graduate Assistants are responsible for both their own academic endeavors as well as departmental assignments as part of their assistantship appointments. This may cause scheduling or other workplace problems and each department will have slightly different ways of handling workplace issues. Details of how workplace issues are to be resolved should be discussed during the introductory meeting between the Graduate Assistant and their Supervisor. During this meeting, students should be informed of their right to appeal decisions that may affect them.

As a general rule, it is preferable that problems be resolved in an informal manner and at the lowest level in the chain of command as possible. In many cases, problems can be resolved with good communication between a supervisor and the Graduate Assistant. But students should be informed that they may discuss problems with the Graduate Program Advisor, the Chairperson of the department, the Dean of the Graduate School, or other University personnel.

Graduate students who have grievances against another student, staff, faculty, or an administrator may seek the advice of the Graduate Program Advisor, the Chairperson of the department, the Dean of the Graduate School, or other University personnel. Graduate Program Advisors who become aware of a potential grievance situation involving a graduate student should bring this to the attention of the Chairperson of the department or the Dean of the Graduate School.

For academic issues involving policies, procedures, or affecting standing in a graduate program, the student may submit a written petition to the Graduate School. If no resolution can be achieved through informal means, the petition will, when appropriate, be sent to the Committee for Petitions of the Graduate Council. The committee makes recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School regarding the disposition of

1. Student petitions requesting departure from established Graduate School policies,
2. Petitions involving charges of academic misconduct involving graduate students; these cases may be brought by the student or by the faculty member involved, and
3. Petitions involving a perceived academic impropriety arising from an action taken by an instructor, a department, or a committee charged to administer academic policies of a particular department or college.

Petitions should be submitted during the semester in which the incident occurred or during the subsequent two semesters.

## **HARASSMENT**

An incident of harassment may be reported to any University official or faculty member, including an individual's supervisor, department chairperson or dean, the Director of Human Resources, or the Dean of Students. Students who need to report an incident of harassment after regular business hours of the University should report the incident to the Campus Security Office if the employee's supervisor is unavailable and/or other administrative offices are closed. The Campus Security Office will take appropriate action and will notify the appropriate administrative office at the beginning of the next business day.

The harassment policy for The University of Tulsa is located in The University of Tulsa Policies and Procedures Manual which is located at: <https://portal.utulsa.edu> Once you have logged in, click on Offices, Human Resources, Policy Manual. The very first link on this page is called Policy on Harassment.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **GRADUATE ASSISTANT JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

Graduate students with Departmental/Teaching Assistantships are primarily assigned to teaching functions or duties that advance the educational mission of the department. All activities directly related to the teaching function and to the satisfactory accomplishment of the teaching process are appropriate duties for the DAs/TAs. These activities include research for lecture notes, grading student performance, and other teaching-related activities for the class or classes assigned to the DA. For example, grading for the DAs assigned classes is acceptable. However, grading for a faculty member is not implied or intended unless justification for such an activity is provided by the faculty in terms of academic or professional growth on the part of the DA (i.e., conducted with the faculty in an instructional situation).

DAs who are assigned responsibility for a class or laboratory group are expected to perform their duties as responsible professionals representing the University. This includes meeting all scheduled classes, being prepared for each day's class, knowing the background of knowledge which students bring to the class, and becoming aware of the students' special interests and capabilities.

The period of appointment and stipend will be specified in the written contract. The normal DA appointment is for 20 hours of work per week. Some appointments may be for fewer hours per week, dependent upon departmental requirements. For many DAs, the workload will be relatively uniform throughout the semester, but for others the load will be uneven due to the nature of the duties. If the average workload is significantly more than 20 hours per week, this problem should be discussed with your immediate supervisor or the Dean of the Graduate School.

#### **GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS**

RAs are responsible for performing all tasks related to research for which they have primary responsibility and for which they may possibly receive credit via a single or jointly authored publication (article, presentation, thesis, etc.). When assisting faculty with research projects, activities should be beneficial in furthering the RA's knowledge of, and skills in, the research process and/or which will enhance their understanding of the content or object of the research. Activities such as library research on the availability of source material, data collection, statistical analysis, and data processing tasks are examples of appropriate activities. Use of RAs by faculty, intended or unintended, that is of questionable value to the RA's understanding of research processes or the content being researched, and that will be primarily of personal or professional benefit to the faculty, is inappropriate. For the preparation of publications or presentations of a scholarly nature, joint efforts between faculty and graduate students are encouraged. However, ethical standards of the discipline should govern the publication credits, and the majority of an RAs' activities should be of educational or professional value to the RA.

RAs normally will be responsible to the faculty member who is the principal investigator on the research project, and the RA duties will be assigned by that person. Criteria in the selection of RAs include a strong academic record, coursework related to the field of research, successful graduate study in the department and an interest in the research topic.

The period of appointment and stipend will be specified in the written contract. The normal fall and spring semester RA appointment is for 20 hours of work per week, dependent upon research requirements. Some appointments may be for fewer hours. A summer RA appointment may be for more than 20 hours per week.



## GRADUATE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Graduate Administrative Assistantships (AAs) provide stipends and tuition to students working in university administrative offices. These assistantships are funded through the various administrative offices and assign duties that are not necessarily related to the student's area of academic study and interest. AAs working in these offices should conduct themselves as professionals and are, therefore, expected to observe standard office etiquette and operating procedures. Interpersonal skills are often required and are of the utmost importance, since many Administrative Assistantships are located in offices that frequently interact with the public. All University of Tulsa employees and AAs are encouraged to provide excellent customer service and maintain high standards in their interactions with the public, whether they are affiliated with the University or not. You must always be cognizant of your behavior, manners, and attitude.

Utmost confidentiality must be upheld on a daily basis in these offices, since you will often be working with sensitive personal information for current students, staff, faculty, or prospective students. It is a good policy to avoid discussing what you have seen or heard in the office with anyone outside of the office, even if it is another University office. If an AA violates the rules of confidentiality concerning student records, their assistantship may be terminated immediately. Read and familiarize yourself with the University policies concerning FERPA. The federal laws by which the University must abide are explained in the *Student Handbook* and address what records students may have access to and how privacy is protected.

The period of appointment and stipend will be specified in the written contract. The normal AA appointment is for 20 hours of work per week, dependent upon departmental requirements. Some appointments may be for fewer hours.

## APPENDIX B

### USEFUL FORMS AND CONTACT LISTS

#### THE I-9 FORM

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires all employers to verify employment eligibility of anyone hired after November 6, 1986. Graduate Assistants at The University of Tulsa are required to complete Section 1 of the I-9 Form. Instructions are included on the back of the form.

This form can be found at the University of Tulsa Student Portal webpage at <https://portal.utulsa.edu>. Once you have logged in, click on Offices, Human Resources and Risk Management, and choose Payroll. The link to the I-9 form is on this page.

The I-9 Form should be brought in person, with Section 1 completed, to the Payroll Office in Fisher Hall (formerly known as Twin Towers) before the end of the third day of work. The student should bring all documents necessary to establish their identity and their eligibility to work so that TU may complete Section 2 of the form.

**It is absolutely essential that the I-9 Form be filed in the Payroll Office in Fisher Hall (formerly known as Twin Towers) by the end of the student's third working day.** If the student lacks some documentation required to allow TU to complete Section 2, they must bring the form to the Payroll office with a receipt showing that they have applied for the missing document(s). Graduate Assistants must then produce the required document(s) within two weeks of when they begin work.

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#### THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

2021/2022 Grad Payroll Dates

#### Graduate Student and Monthly Payroll

<b>Pay Period Begins</b>	<b>Pay Period Ends</b>	<b>Pay Date</b>
07/01/21	07/31/21	07/30/21
08/01/21	08/31/21	08/31/21
09/01/21	09/30/21	09/30/21
10/01/21	10/31/21	10/29/21
11/01/21	11/30/21	11/30/21
12/01/21	12/31/21	12/23/21??
01/01/22	01/31/22	01/31/22
02/01/22	02/28/22	02/28/22
03/01/22	03/31/22	03/31/22
04/01/22	04/30/22	04/29/22
05/01/22	05/31/22	05/31/22
06/01/22	06/30/22	06/30/22

Employment Instructions for **International, F1 & J1** Students

To be employed at the University of Tulsa for the **first** time:

- I. Get your student ID from the Housing office
  - a. Requires class schedule and identification
- II. Set up a checking account at a bank
  - a. Get checks for your new account.
    - i. Checks show name, address, account number and electronic routing numbers
- III. Proof of employment will be required. You will need:
  - a. Hourly positions
    - i. “Letter of Employment” from International Student Services
  - b. Monthly, graduate appointments
    - i. Graduate Award Notification issued by the Graduate School
- IV. Apply for a Social Security card at the Social Security office in Tulsa (4750 S. Garnett Road, Tulsa, OK 74146).
  - a. This requires:
    - i. Passport (includes the I-94)
    - ii. I-20 or DS-2019 form
    - iii. Letter of Employment
    - iv. Student ID
    - v. When you apply, you get a receipt
    - vi. Receive card by mail (takes 1-3 weeks)
    - vii. When card is received, take card to Payroll (in the Office of Personnel and Campus Services. They need to copy the card and record the number.
- V. **Before you start working.** Complete employment forms in Payroll.
  - a. This requires:
    - i. I-9 Employment Eligibility form. This requires:
      1. Passport (includes the I-94)
      2. I-20 or DS-2019 form
    - ii. W-4 Withholding form
      1. Marked “single” and “one” allowance (even if you are married) as long as you are a resident of your home country for tax purposes
      2. Marked “non resident” on line 6
    - iii. A copy of your Social Security card or receipt for application
    - iv. Tax Assessment Intake Form (orange)
      1. Must be updated yearly – in Payroll
- VI. Complete Direct Deposit form. This requires:
  - a. A check with “void” written on it
- VII. Call if you have questions
  - a. Payroll x2610
  - b. Center for Global Engagement x2329
  - c. Graduate School x2336

**GRADUATE STUDENT BUSINESS CARD ORDER FORM**  
**(PROCEDURE ON REVERSE SIDE)**

- Ordering Business Cards through Career Services (20 free cards)  
 Ordering Business Cards through Graduate School (250 cards for \$26.70)  
(Please check one)

This form must be typed.



THE UNIVERSITY *of*  
**TULSA**

1 First Name Last Name

2 Program\*

3 ASSTSHIP/FELLOWSHIP NAME\*\*

4 Building Name, Room Number • 800 South Tucker Drive • Tulsa, Oklahoma 74104-9700

5 918-631-#### • Cell ###-###-####(optional • Student Email Address@utulsa.edu

Type the information on the above lines.

2 \*Program: Pick one of the following to insert on Line 2 above.

Master's Student in \_\_\_\_\_

Doctoral Student in \_\_\_\_\_

Doctoral Candidate in \_\_\_\_\_

*The program must be a degree program listed in the Graduate Bulletin and to which the student is admitted.*

*Example: Geosciences, History, Finance, Chemical Engineering.*

*If using the designation of Doctoral Candidate, the student must be admitted to candidacy by the Graduate School.*

3 \*\*Type of Assistantship/Fellowship: This is an optional line. Only the following designations may be used. Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, Graduate Assistant, Woobank Teaching Assistant, Henneke Research Fellow, Bellwether Fellow, NSF Graduate Fellow, Fulbright Scholar, Parriott Scholar.

5 \*\*\*Departmental Phone Extension (Required) and Personal Cell Phone Number (Optional)

All students must list a TU departmental or office phone number as the first phone number on their business card. Students also have the option of listing a personal cell phone number after their departmental phone number.

As the graduate student's advisor, I confirm that the student has at least a 3.0 cumulative graduate GPA, and that the above information is correct, including the departmental telephone number.

Yes  No

Advisors Name \_\_\_\_\_

Print Graduate Advisor's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Advisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Collegiate Dean's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Graduate Dean's Signature as Approval*

(Required of Arts and Sciences graduate students whose cards will be paid for by their academic department)

# GRADUATE STUDENT BUSINESS CARD PROCEDURE

Graduate students wishing to have business cards must follow the procedure outlined below. The business cards must be approved by the advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School. The Arts and Sciences Dean must also approve business cards for graduate students in his college, if they are being paid for by the student's academic department.

1. The student must be in good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better.
2. The Graduate Student Business Card Order Form **information must be typed**. Format of the card and the information required is listed below. The card must display the official University of Tulsa logo.

Upper, left-hand - TU image and logo

Upper, right-hand -

1st line - Student's First Name Last Name

2<sup>nd</sup> line – Master's or Doctoral Student in (Program) or Doctoral Candidate in (Program). The program must be a degree program listed in the *Graduate Bulletin* and to which the student is admitted.

If using the designation of Doctoral Candidate, the student must be admitted to candidacy by the Graduate School.

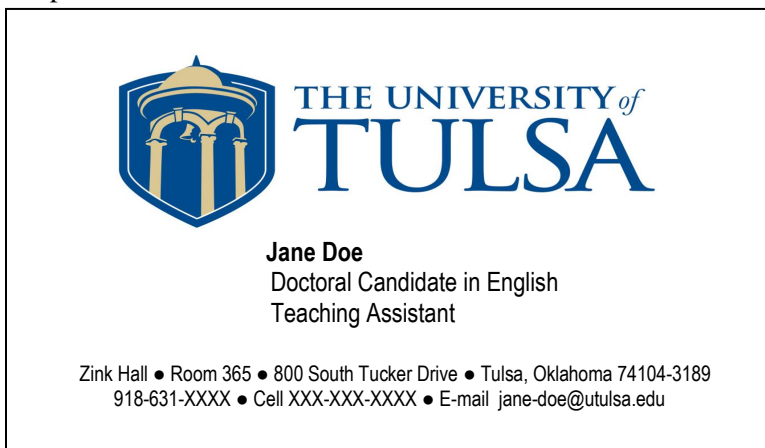
3rd line – (Optional) Title of the assistantship or fellowship the student currently holds: Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, Graduate Assistant, Woobank Assistant, Henneke Research Fellow, Bellwether Fellow, NSF Graduate Fellow, Fulbright Scholar, or Parriott Scholar

Lower, left-hand -

1st line – Building and Room Number of the Departmental Office and the University's Official Street Address

2<sup>nd</sup> line - Departmental Telephone Number – Followed by optional Personal Cell Phone Number and Student's TU e-mail address

Example:



3. The student's home department must verify that the departmental phone number on the card is correct.
4. The Graduate Student Business Card Order Form must be signed by the advisor before submission to the Graduate School office. Students enrolled in Arts and Sciences graduate programs whose business cards are being paid for by their department must also get the signature of the Arts and Sciences Collegiate Dean prior to submission.
5. The Graduate School will verify the student's assistantship or fellowship prior to obtaining the signature of the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School will submit the documents to Purchasing.

## Departmental: Payment and Placing Order

1. The student or the student's department must pay for the cards. The cost is \$26.70 for 250 cards.
  - A) When the student is paying for the cards: a check is to be made out to the University of Tulsa and given to the department. This check will be deposited in departmental account.  
The department prepares a requisition for payment to Hawkeye Printing for the Purchasing Department.  
Note in the comment section of requisition if order is a rush.
  - B) The requisition, an original and one copy of the completed Graduate Student Business Card Order Form, the completed Purchasing Services Form, and two TU Business Cards with changes noted on them must be brought to the Graduate School for processing. The Graduate School will fax to Hawkeye Printing for rush orders.
2. Delivery normally takes approximately two weeks after Purchasing receives all the necessary information. Cards are sent to the student's department.  
If a rush order is necessary, Purchasing Department must be informed it is a priority order. Rush orders normally take three to four days, and the business cards must be picked up at Hawkeye Printing at 2707 E 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74104.