

College of Graduate and Professional Studies Graduate Assistant Guidelines

ELIGIBILITY: To maintain eligibility for your graduate assistantship, you must remain enrolled as an active student in a master's degree program or a joint master's degree and certification program and **you must enroll for a minimum of 6 to a maximum of 12 graduate credits per fall and spring semesters.** (Note: Full-time graduate assistant requirements should not be confused with full-time graduate student requirements. To be considered a full-time graduate student, you need to be enrolled for a minimum of 9 graduate credits per fall and spring semesters.)

Graduate students seeking certification only are ineligible for assistantships, therefore if you graduate with your master's and continue to pursue certification only you forfeit your assistantship position. Please be aware that if you are seeking certification and are required to register for student teaching, you will be unable to continue your assistantship in the term which you will be student teaching regardless of your status in a master's degree program.

PLACEMENT: Graduate assistantships are generally appointed to begin in the fall for one academic year with the possibility of reappointment for a second year. In the event you are placed in an assistantship beginning in the spring semester, you will be appointed for that term only and may be renewed for the following academic year, plus the additional fall semester. The limit for a graduate assistantship is four regular semesters (fall and spring).

TUITION WAIVER: All full-time (300 hours/semester) graduate assistants for the academic year receive a tuition waiver of 24 graduate credits (12 earned in the fall and 12 earned in the spring). **(Tuition waiver for graduate students does not apply for undergraduate credits, auditing courses, or EDW workshops.)** If your 12 credits in the fall semester are not fully utilized, they may be carried into the winter session and/or the spring semester. If you do not utilize the full 24 graduate credits by the end of the spring semester, these credits may be carried into the summer sessions, provided you do not graduate in May. Once the academic year concludes with the end of summer session III or you graduate, whichever comes first, any remaining tuition waiver is forfeited.

Half-time (150 hours/semester) graduate assistants for the academic year receive a tuition waiver of 12 graduate credits (6 earned in the fall and 6 earned in the spring).

Tuition waivers cannot be used prior to the starting date of the assistantship.

Note: If you should resign the assistantship or be terminated at any point during the semester, you automatically forfeit any remaining tuition waiver. Your stipend and tuition waiver will be prorated at the time of your resignation or termination.

STUDENT FEES: The tuition waiver which is made available to you by your contract is indicated in your appointment letter. This waiver does not include the general fee, technology fee and other appropriate university fees. You are responsible for paying these fees by the due date designated by the Bursar's Office.

WORK LOAD: During the period of your assistantship, you are not permitted to work for the University as a regular employee, through temporary help agencies, or on a contract basis (e.g., honoraria). Half-time and full-time graduate assistants may work on the regular student payroll, but combined employment should not generally exceed 30 hours per week during academic sessions or 40 hours per week during breaks.

WORK SCHEDULE: Full-time graduate assistants are expected to work 300 hours/semester, with a typical work schedule being 20 hours per week over a fifteen-week semester. Half-time graduate assistants are expected to work 150 hours/semester, typically representing 10 hours/week during the academic semester of fifteen weeks. Your specific schedule will be designated by your supervisor, flexibility in scheduling is permitted, as long as the total expected work hours for the semester are realized. Graduate assistantships begin the first day of each semester and end the last day of each semester (finals week hours will be dependent upon your schedule throughout the semester and if you have already fulfilled your hours requirement), and you are expected to work the total number of hours as designated in your award letter. During the academic year, graduate assistants are not required to work on the following days: fall break, Thanksgiving break, winter session, Martin Luther King Day, spring break, possible weather make-up days, and reading days.

There are no legal or payroll policies mandating lunch or other breaks for student employees, including graduate assistants, over the age of 18. Breaks are not included in your required hours per week (i.e. if you take a lunch or other break during your shift, you may not count that time toward your work hours to meet assistantship requirements). If you work an extended day or over a period that you feel you require a break for lunch or other reasons, this should be worked into your schedule by you and your supervisor.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT PERFORMANCE: Graduate assistants are required to perform their assigned duties in a thoroughly professional manner, meeting performance expectations specified by the supervisor, including but not limited to matters involving professional attire, demeanor, productivity, punctuality and collegiality. Failure to meet performance expectations can result in termination of the assistantship at any time. When problems arise, the supervisor and graduate assistant are expected to seek resolution. Should this fail, the head or chair of the office/department will seek to resolve the matter. If the problem is not corrected, it will be referred to the graduate dean for final resolution. Additionally, graduate assistants will be formally evaluated on an annual basis; copies of the graduate assistant evaluation form are available in the College of Graduate & Professional Studies or at <http://www.millersville.edu/gps>. Request for evaluation will be made periodically by the College of Graduate & Professional Studies. In the unusual circumstance that an assistantship is terminated, the graduate student loses entitlement to both stipend and tuition waiver, prorated to the time of termination.

CHANGES TO ASSISTANTSHIP: It is the graduate assistant's responsibility to notify his or her immediate supervisor and the College of Graduate & Professional Studies in writing of any change precluding the fulfillment of the assistantship assignment.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS: All graduate students must secure a student identification card from the Campus I.D. Office located in Boyer. First card is free, replacement cost is \$20.00.

HOUSING: The only residence hall accommodation for graduate students is that which is provided to those who are assigned Housing and Residential assistantships. For Off-Campus Housing, contact 872-3707.