



UNIVERSITY *of*
WEST FLORIDA

**DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK FOR
GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook identifies and clarifies the policies and procedures governing a graduate student's assistantship position. The goal is to answer frequently asked questions for department members regarding assistantships, including the types of assistantships available at UWF, the general requirements governing assistantships, the policies structuring payment and waivers associated with assistantships, and the student obligations for maintaining a graduate assistantship. This document parallels the Graduate Assistant Handbook.

Upon a student's selection for a graduate assistantship position, the department should provide the student with all necessary information regarding the appointment. This information is outlined in the Graduate Assistantship Award Letter. The letter should specify the parameters of the assistantship, including classification title, FTE allocation, rate of pay, and the appointment period. The student must sign the award letter and return it to the hiring department to formally accept the assistantship position and its terms.

TYPES OF ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate assistantships at UWF are admitted master's-level, specialist-level, or doctoral-level students who are employed with the University on a part-time basis for the primary purpose of assisting in classroom or laboratory instruction or in research; however, there are different types of assistantships available. The students and supervisors should make sure to understand the responsibilities accompanying their position.

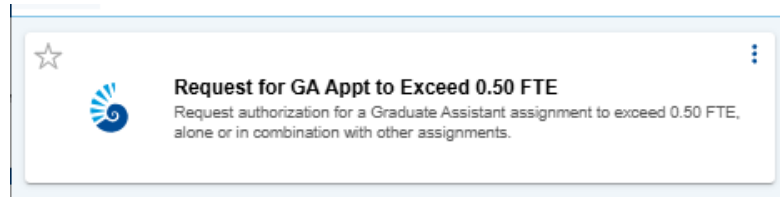
Graduate assistantships serve as a vital function for the University by supporting departments, programs, faculty, and personnel across the campus community. The positions also advance the professional development of graduate students. For this reason, the duties performed by a graduate student serving in an assistantship capacity must directly contribute to their program of study, unless the student is employed by a non-academic department. It is the responsibility of the hiring unit to ensure duties complement the student's degree program.

Department heads and supervising faculty are responsible for assuring that a graduate student with an assistantship position receives ample opportunities to make continuing progress toward their degree completion.

All graduate assistantships, regardless of classification, must meet the following guidelines:

- The student is responsible for assisting UWF faculty members(s) or staff with appropriate duties.
- Specific duties and roles are to be determined by the department or office, and it is the responsibility of that department or office to make the student aware of these duties.
- The student should be employed for a minimum of 10 hours per week (0.25 FTE), but no more than 20 hours per week (0.5 FTE), except for Resident Hall Directors who can be employed for 30 hours per week (0.75 FTE). The initial assistantship appointment, not a combination of multiple appointments, must be for no less than 10 hours per week (0.25 FTE). Though a student may have more than one assistantship appointment, the cumulative hours of student employment should not

exceed 20 hours per week without permission from the Office of Graduate Studies via submission of the Request for GA Appt to Exceed 0.50 FTE (located in MyUWF).



- The student is subject to office or department employee guidelines in addition to assistantship guidelines.
- The minimum hourly rate of pay is \$17.25 per hour (as of July 6, 2025).
- **HR has restrictions regarding work location for non-exempt (hourly) employees. Please contact their office or review their department website for current information.**

There are five (5) types of assistantship appointments that are discussed below.

Graduate Assistant (9186)

A Graduate Assistant (GA) appointed under the 9186 designation is an admitted graduate student providing support for academic departments, programs, faculty, or personnel. Compensation for a student employed under this designation is **hourly**, so an electronic timesheet (in MyUWF) reporting the hours of work completed must be submitted on a bi-weekly basis.

A GA may be employed in a college or department office that performs professional or service duties outside of teaching or research. When a non-academic university office has an assistantship, the student's duties are not required to correspond directly to their graduate program, but they must provide professional experience to enhance future career success.

Graduate Research Assistant (9182)

A Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) is an admitted graduate student assigned to research duties. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) defines a Graduate Research Assistant as one whose "specific assignments are for the purpose of conducting research, regardless of academic discipline, by performing duties such as preparing and conducting scientific research or engaging in original scholarship/scholarly inquiry under the supervision and mentorship of a faculty member or senior researcher."

Compensation for a student employed under this designation is **hourly**, so an electronic timesheet (in MyUWF) reporting the hours of work completed must be submitted on a bi-weekly basis. Research assistantships may be financed through funds from gifts, grants, contracts, state appropriations designated for research, or through the University's internally sponsored programs.

In addition to the general guidelines for assistantships, a student employed under the GRA designation is subject to the following unique guidelines.

- The student must perform research duties under the supervision of an appropriate faculty member or administrator of UWF. Such research duties may include, but are not

limited to,

- assisting in lab research,
 - reviewing and summarizing scholarship,
 - assisting in community-based research activities,
 - developing research and evaluation surveys,
 - collecting data,
 - analyzing data using software analyses programs,
 - presenting presentations, and/or
 - writing draft research reports.
- The student is responsible for assisting faculty members with research related to the student's degree program.

GRAs who are employed conducting sponsored research (research funded by a grant) may be required to complete additional training, completion of which is tracked by the Office of Research Administration and Engagement. For more information on the ethical responsibilities related to sponsored research, see the UWF [Responsible Conduct in Research](#) (RCR) Plan.

GRA positions are conditioned upon any required screening of the student's professional and academic record by the UWF Research Integrity Office (RIO), pursuant to Florida Statutes §1010.35. If your department decides to appoint a GRA, please contact Human Resources to provide the student's information once the accepted award letter has been returned to your office.

Graduate Teaching Assistant (9184)

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) are admitted graduate students assigned to teaching or teaching-related duties. They may be assigned as classroom assistants, lab assistants, or other roles directly related to classroom instruction. According to the IPEDS, Graduate Teaching Assistants assist faculty or other instructional staff in postsecondary institutions by performing teaching or teaching-related duties, such as developing teaching materials, giving examinations, and grading examinations or papers. A GTA appointed under the 9184 designation assists an Instructor of Record but is **not** the Instructor of Record. Compensation for a student employed under this designation is **hourly**, so an electronic timesheet (in MyUWF) reporting the hours of work completed must be submitted on a bi-weekly basis. This assistantship type requires a background screening. Please contact Human Resources for additional information regarding the background screening process.

Graduate Teaching Assistant – Instructor of Record (9185)

A Graduate Teaching Assistant - Instructor of Record (GTA-IOR) is an admitted graduate student who is **assigned to teach a course** and is the **Instructor of Record** for that course. This position is paid on a **salaried** basis and is **exempt** from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This assistantship type requires a background screening. Please contact Human Resources for additional information regarding the background screening process.

A GTA-IOR appointed under the 9185 class code, at a minimum, must adhere to the *UWF Academic Credential Policy Statement* below and adhere to UWF Policy AC-39.04-05/25 (<https://uwf.edu/offices/board-of-trustees/policies>).

UWF Academic Credential Policy Statement:

Graduate teaching assistants serving as Instructors of Record: master's degree in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations. In the case of lecture courses and laboratory sections, GTAs who do not hold a master's degree will be assigned as instructors of record to lower-level, and in most cases, to freshman-level courses. Graduate Teaching Assistants may not be assigned to teach graduate courses unless they hold the terminal or a highly-related degree in the teaching field.

In addition to the minimum requirements expected of all graduate assistants, a GTA who serves as an Instructor of Record must:

- Submit to the department an official transcript, a curriculum vita, two letters of recommendation from department professors, and a Statement of Teaching (which includes, but is not limited to, the student's short-term goals as a Graduate Teaching Assistant as well as the relevance of the experience to the student's long-term goals).
- Upload a syllabus prior to the first day of instruction (see the documents required of all instructors for university accreditation). Departments might require additional materials.
- A student who wishes to serve as a GTA-IOR, but whose first language is not English, will be required to demonstrate English proficiency. Beyond meeting the minimum requirements for admission to graduate studies at UWF as well as the minimum requirements for individual departments offering graduate programs, a GTA serving as an Instructor of Record must obtain and report a minimum TOEFL iBT Listening/Comprehension score of 23 to the Office of Graduate Studies. Written English proficiency training is available through the UWF Writing Lab. Spoken English proficiency training is available through [International Affairs](#). See the admissions criteria provided on the [Office of Graduate Studies's website](#) for a list of the English proficiency tests UWF recognizes as well as the scores required for demonstration of competency and proficiency.
- Perform all the duties regularly performed by an Instructor of Record. It is the responsibility of the department or office to make the student aware of these duties.
- Sign the award letter (mandatory) and the position expectation form (optional) prior to beginning the assistantship. This form will indicate the student's acknowledgement of the expectations of the department/office expectations.
- Departments may require additional materials, so GTA-IORs should contact the department chair or program coordinator.

Resident Hall Director (9189)

A Resident Hall Director (HD) is an admitted master's-level student whose primary responsibility is toward the operation of a university resident hall or cluster of resident halls. Compensation for a student employed under the 9189 classification is **salaried** with an on-campus apartment and meal plan.

Students employed under this designation are subject to the following guidelines:

- A Resident Hall Director can be employed for a maximum of 30 hours per week.
- An HD will supervise 6-12 Resident Assistants and other student employees in the residence hall.

- An HD will act as a resource person for residents.
- An HD will explain and adhere to University housing policies and rules for residents.
- An HD will provide assistance and support to students.
- An HD will be prepared to mediate disputes among hall residents. The student must be prepared to deal with and report inappropriate behavior or rule infractions committed by hall residents.
- An HD will respond to emergencies occurring in residence halls.
- An HD will ensure that maintenance needs for the residence halls are effectively reported.
- An HD will maintain the required records of student residential life.
- An HD will create a residential environment which is safe, secure, stimulating, and conducive to the personal growth of the residents.

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility for Assistantship

To be eligible for an assistantship, the student must meet the following minimum requirements:

- The student must be an admitted, degree-seeking student in a master's, specialist, or doctoral program at UWF.
- The student must be enrolled in at least 6 hours of graduate coursework during fall and spring semesters and in at least 3 hours of graduate coursework in the summer semester. Continuing Education courses do not count toward the minimum number of graduate hours required for eligibility for assistantship unless the courses count toward degree requirements. Undergraduate courses do not count towards the number of enrolled hours for eligibility purposes. If the student has fewer than the minimum required credit hours for assistantship eligibility remaining in their degree plan or has only thesis or dissertation hours remaining, then this policy does not apply.¹
- The student must be in good academic standing (Master's level: maintain a 3.0 overall graduate GPA; Specialist and Doctoral levels: maintain a 3.25 overall graduate GPA; and both levels require the student to not be on academic probation).

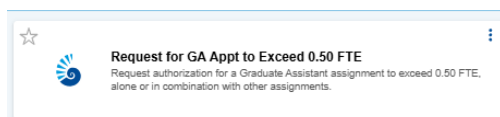
Additional documents, such as letters of recommendation, a curriculum vita or resume, or writing sample may be required by the hiring department.

English as a Second Language

Students who wish to serve as Graduate Teaching Assistants (9184 and 9185), but whose first language is not English, will be required to demonstrate English proficiency. Beyond meeting the minimum requirements for admission to graduate studies at UWF as well as the minimum requirements for individual departments offering graduate programs, GTAs serving as Instructors of Record must obtain and report a minimum TOEFL iBT Listening/Comprehension score of 23 to the Office of Graduate Studies. Written English proficiency training is available through the [UWF Writing Lab](#). Spoken English proficiency training is available through [UWF International Affairs](#).

Time Limit and Number of Assistantships

The time limit on assistantships depends on the type of assistantship as well as the department or office for which the student works. Although each assistantship is subject to termination at the end of the semester, students may continue the same assistantship for multiple semesters if the department or office has a position and appropriate funds. Students may hold multiple graduate assistantship positions if the total number of hours worked per week does not exceed 0.50 FTE or 20 hours. Requests to exceed a combined total of 0.50 FTE may be made via submitting a Request for GA Appt to Exceed 0.50 FTE form found in MyUWF.



¹ Note that graduate assistants at the thesis/dissertation stage of their programs must maintain continuous enrollment by registering for at least one credit hour each semester. If the thesis course is the only available course to register for during a specific semester, then the student may be eligible for the assistantship with other non-thesis courses remaining in their degree plan.

Required Training for Graduate Assistants

For All Assistantship Positions

All graduate assistantship students must complete the following training requirements within one month (30 days) of the start date of their initial employment. These training modules can be found in the SCOOP app in MyUWF.

- FERPA Basics: This one-time training can be accessed under the Knowledge Worker section.
 - NOTE: There are multiple training modules in this section. Graduate assistants are only required to complete the FERPA Basics module.
- Anti-Harassment Associate Certificate (AHA) - Harassment & Discrimination Prevention: This training is mandatory for all university employees and must be completed every two years.
- Statement of Understanding Regarding Confidentiality

For GTAs

There is an additional requirement for any graduate assistantship classified as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) or Graduate Teaching Assistant-Instructor of Record (IOR) to complete a one-time GTA Orientation session. The Office of Graduate Studies offers this as an online course available in Canvas. A student designated as a GTA or IOR will be automatically enrolled in the Canvas GTA Orientation and an accompanying course titled "Essentials of Digital Instruction," developed by UWF's IDT staff. These courses provided a wealth of resources to new student teachers. The courses are not graded and will remain accessible for reference as long as the student retains their teaching position. Any student who has already completed the GTA orientation is considered compliant and will not be required to retake the online course(s).

Some academic departments opt to host their own GTA orientation, which also meets the training requirement.

PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL AID

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Explanations

Full-time assistantships (0.50 FTE) require students to perform assistantship assignments for 20 hours per week during the period of the assignment. Half-time assistantships (0.25 FTE) require students to work 10 hours per week during the period of assignment. The minimum required for an initial appointment is 0.25 FTE. Graduate students with initial appointments of less than 10 hours per week should be hired in a Student Assistant position type; they cannot be classified in any graduate assistantship position and are not eligible for waivers. Please contact Human Resources for guidance regarding student assistant position classification options.

Two priorities govern the allocation of graduate assistantships: University recruitment and departmental teaching and research needs. The Office of Graduate Studies encourages and strongly recommends that departments hire graduate students to the full assistantship appointment allowance (0.50 FTE or 20 hours per week). A graduate assistantship position or combined positions may not exceed full-time appointments (over 0.50 FTE or 20 hours per week) without prior approval from the Office of Graduate Studies. Departments wishing to have an assistantship position that will result in a graduate student working more than a 0.50 FTE must submit a Request for Graduate Assistantship (GA) Assignment (Appt) to Exceed 0.50 FTE form via MyUWF. Once the form is fully approved, the department may proceed with the appointment steps indicated in the Department Responsibilities section.

Stipend Minimums

The minimum hourly pay for graduate assistantships is \$17.25 per hour, as of July 6, 2025. This payment will be generated in a bi-weekly paycheck for which the student submits an electronic timesheet every two weeks to be approved by their department chair or office supervisor. For GTA – Instructor of Record (9185) positions, this payment is generated through a semester stipend at the equivalent of \$17.25 per hour. For graduate assistantship positions receiving a stipend, the money will be dispersed evenly throughout the pay periods associated with the appointment dates. No electronic timesheet is required for this position type.

Part of the financial package for graduate assistants working a combination of 0.25 FTE or greater (10 hours or more per week) is eligibility for a matriculation waiver of the in-state portion of graduate basic tuition, excluding mandatory fees. Out-of-state residency students will also qualify for the out-of-state fee waiver, which will bring their tuition to the in-state rate.

A matriculation waiver may be available for the position but it is not guaranteed. The hiring department should contact the college Dean's office staff or, for non-academic departments, contact the division's main office to determine if there are available matriculation waivers to offer with the position. The graduate student must be informed if there is a matriculation waiver included with their assistantship in the award letter.

Out-of-state tuition fee waivers apply automatically to any graduate students with an assistantship that are classified with a residency code other than Florida if they do not already receive this waiver through other qualifying means. This is important to know when considering any potential obligations of repayment for the waiver(s) received due to the assistantship.

For more information on tuition and fees, please refer to the [Tuition and Fees](#) section of the Graduate Catalog.

Tax Obligations

All students must obtain a Social Security Number in order to receive payments from the University, including fellowships, assistantships, and tuition support. Students are responsible for determining their tax obligations.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) excludes certain types of student wages from the IRS definition of “employment” for purposes of FICA tax withholding. The Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 3121(b)(10) provides that wages paid by a university to one of its student employees who is enrolled at least half-time and regularly attending classes are exempt from the FICA tax withholding. The University has the sole discretion to determine whether a student’s employment at the University of West Florida is exempt from FICA withholding taxes.

Departments should refer to the Human Resources and Payroll websites to determine the implications if the students are not exempt from Social Security/Medicare withholdings.

Graduate Tuition and Fees

The cost of graduate attendance is composed of two separate elements: (1) tuition and (2) mandatory fees. The cost of tuition and fees at the University of West Florida is composed of the Florida resident tuition per graduate credit hour, differentials for Non-Florida and Alabama residents, and mandatory fees. For a full presentation of UWF tuition and mandatory fees, refer to the [UWF Schedule of Tuition and Fees](#).

Note that the Florida Legislature, the Florida Board of Governors, and the UWF Board of Trustees periodically review tuition and fees, so these figures are subject to adjustment. In addition, certain academic programs may require additional differential tuition to cover unique programmatic costs. Students should contact the Office of the Registrar for the most current figures.

If the student has any questions regarding the specific breakdown of their tuition and fees, please direct them to the Cost by Course app in MyUWF.

Waivers

Eligibility requirements for receiving a matriculation waiver or out-of-state fee waiver are the same as the requirements for holding a graduate assistantship position. However, graduate students should be aware that the eligibility requirements for financial aid and for graduate assistantship matriculation waivers might differ. Students interested in receiving financial aid should complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and be aware of the requirements to receive aid. Contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#) for more information.

A student must work the assistantship position for the entire length of the academic semester to receive a full waiver. Please refer to the published academic calendar to determine the appropriate dates.

Matriculation Waivers

All graduate students with a graduate assistantship may be eligible to receive a matriculation waiver (also referred to as a “tuition waiver”) toward a portion (50% or 100%) of the Florida resident tuition per credit hour, excluding mandatory fees, to be applied during all semesters specified in the Graduate Assistantship Award Letter. **Note that all graduate students are required to pay the mandatory fees associated with enrollment. Additionally, a waiver is not a scholarship and cannot result in a monetary refund back to the student.**

Students who begin working in a graduate assistantship position after the beginning of the term receive a pro-rated waiver for the length of the term remaining. GTAs (IORs and non-IORs) assigned to a specific course are required to work from the first day to the last day of the specific course. If the course dates are not for a full-term, please specify the dates of that course and appoint the student for that time period. Again, this is only if the student is assigned to complete teaching-related work for a single class that is scheduled for less than a full-term. This will not diminish the eligibility to receive a full waiver.

For a student who has multiple assistantships, each awarding department or unit should specify in the Graduate Assistantship Award Letter if a tuition waiver is being awarded by that department/unit, and if so, the specifics for the waiver amount being awarded. Each of these departments should process the waiver as specified. The percentages must match and cannot total more than 100% combined (e.g. one department provides 50% of 6 CHs, the second department will also have to offer 50% of whatever number of credit hours they choose). One department cannot offer 100% and another department offers only 50% as the total would be greater than 100%. Please discuss with the student if there are other assistantship awards that they have accepted so you may evaluate the options to offer.

The awarding of waivers is subject to school, college, or divisional approval. Note that a student on an assistantship in their last semester and having applied for graduation with fewer than 6 semester hours of required coursework remaining for degree completion is still eligible for waivers.

Academic departments should contact the Dean’s office of your college or school to determine the number of matriculation waiver hours, if any, that your department has to offer during any given semester.

Departments/offices within the Division of Academic Engagement and Student Affairs (DAESA) and Intercollegiate Athletics should contact the main office within their area to determine the available matriculation waiver hours.

Non-academic departments outside of DAESA and Intercollegiate Athletics may request waivers from the Office of Graduate Studies to offer assistantships within their area. The Office of Graduate Studies will email the timeline and requirements for making these requests each semester to the department contacts on file. The process of each request will be included in that email.

Out-of-State Tuition Fee Waiver

All students with a graduate assistantship who are classified as non-Florida residents for tuition purposes are awarded an Out-of-State Tuition Fee Waiver. This award waives the out-of-state fee portion of the student’s total tuition cost. Out-of-state students may also qualify to receive the in-state matriculation

waiver. **Note that a waiver is not a scholarship and cannot result in a monetary refund back to the student.**

Enrolled students who are classified as non-Florida residents for tuition purposes and wish to become Florida residents for tuition purposes should contact the Office of the Registrar for reclassification documentation and information.

Courses Covered by Tuition Waiver

Waivers may be used to cover courses related to the student's academic degree program, including thesis and dissertation hours. Continuing education courses are not eligible for waivers.

Changes in Status Affecting Waivers

The assistantship position must be worked the entire length of the academic semester to receive the full waiver. There are limited exceptions to this requirement (see section on Matriculation Waivers).

If a student drops or withdraws from a course to which a tuition waiver has been applied, the student must repay a prorated amount of the waivers (matriculation and/or out-of-state fee waiver) for the semester. If a student falls below the required number of credit hours for waiver qualification (under 6 credit hours in the fall and spring and under 3 in the summer) as a result of dropping or withdrawing from a course, then the full tuition waiver will be removed and the student must repay the waiver amount in its entirety. Note that a student has the right to appeal the fee that is assessed, but only for the amount that they paid for the tuition. The student cannot appeal the amount of the waiver.

A student with a tuition waiver who is dismissed from the University, resigns from a graduate assistantship, or is terminated at any point during the term will have their tuition waiver removed and must pay a prorated amount of the waivers (matriculation and/or out-of-state fee waiver) received for the remainder of the semester. Waivers of the requirement to repay the waiver will be considered on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances. Hiring departments electing to make a request should submit a Request to waive repayment of GA Tuition Waiver (found in MyUWF).

Financial holds on student records will prevent students from registering for classes, receiving transcripts, or receiving grade reports until payment is received by the Cashier's Office.

Departments must contact the Office of Graduate Studies (gradassistantship@uwf.edu) upon notification of a student resigning or being terminated from an assistantship position. Our office will complete the necessary steps regarding the proration of the waivers.

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The following information is to serve as an order of processing guide for hiring departments. Please complete each step in the order in which they are listed.

Selecting the Student for the Assistantship and Verifying Eligibility

Academic Departments: When evaluating candidates for the needed assistantship, keep in mind that the position must directly contribute to the student's program of study. It is the responsibility of the hiring unit to ensure duties complement the student's degree program.

Non-Academic Departments: The requirement for the position to directly contribute to the student's program of study is not applicable; however, the position must enhance the student's professional development/experience.

Current Degree-Seeking Students: Verify that the student meets all eligibility requirements previously mentioned (GPA, enrollment, and academic standing). If you are selecting a student for a future semester, verify that the individual is admitted in a degree-seeking program and determine the GPA qualifications. Enrollment may not be active at the time of the selection.

New Degree-Seeking Students: Verify that the individual is admitted in a degree-seeking program. Students that are new to a graduate program will likely not have an established graduate GPA at the university. This will not prevent the student from gaining an assistantship. At this phase, only verify that the student is admitted in a degree-seeking program.

Award Letters

Once a student has been selected for a graduate assistantship position, the hiring department must draft a Graduate Assistantship Award Letter. Please note that the award letter is position specific. If the student has multiple positions, each position will require its own award letter.

The award letter must be on official department letterhead and should define the type of assistantship, the position start and end dates, the FTE, the hourly pay rate or salary, and details of the matriculation waiver, if one is being awarded. If there is no matriculation award, then that must be stated. This award letter must only include the details of the assistantship and no other financial items (scholarships, etc.). The Office of Graduate Studies has created an [Award Letter Template](#) for departmental use (optional) to ensure all required items are included in the award letter. The letter may include up to one full academic year at a time, but that information must be specified in the appropriate section. Award letters may not span more than one academic year (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

Once the letter is drafted, please provide it to the student to review and sign indicating acceptance of the assistantship and its terms.

Position Expectations Form - Optional form

The Position Expectation Form (a template in DocuSign) may be used to indicate the position type, the position task expectations (e.g. research-related duties, teaching-related duties, office duties, etc.), position FTE, the supervisor's name and contact information, and semester(s) of the assignment. The

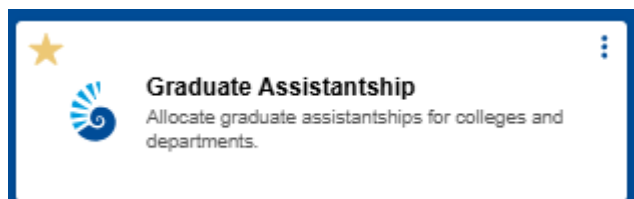
form can be used for up to one full academic year (Fall, Spring, and Summer) and should match the position's corresponding award letter. This form should be sent to the student at the same time as the award letter so they may refer to both.

Once the letter is drafted, the supervisor (or Department Chair, if the supervisor is unavailable) for signature and then to the student. This allows both parties to review and sign that they understand the expectations of the assistantship. If the Department Chair signs in lieu of the direct supervisor, the supervisor's email must be listed as a carbon copy (CC) recipient within DocuSign.

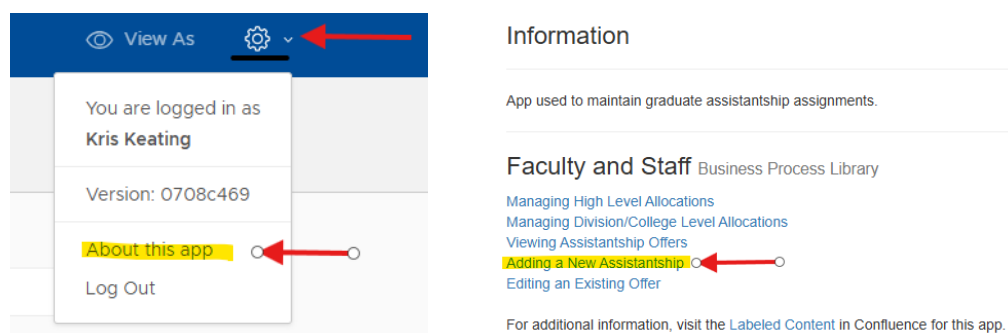
Graduate Assistantship App

Once the award letter and position expectation form (optional) are both returned signed by all parties, please check for active enrollment of the first term for the assistantship. The required enrollment for eligibility is a minimum of 6 CHs in the Fall and Spring terms and 3 CHs in the Summer term. At this time, departments should contact Human Resources (HR) to determine what, if any, hiring documentation will be needed for the student to work in the assistantship position. Please keep in mind that background and research screenings take time. If the assistantship position in your area requires one or both of those screenings, it is the department's responsibility to allocate enough time for each requirement to be completed prior to the start of the academic semester. Once HR has indicated that the student is cleared for hiring, please proceed with the process listed below.

The assistantship information for the enrollment semester should be entered into the Graduate Assistantship app in MyUWF. **Please note that every assistantship position must be entered into the app; this includes positions that do not receive a matriculation waiver.** Each college or division may have designated a specific individual tasked with managing the entries into the app. Please contact your division or college Dean's office to determine their preference.

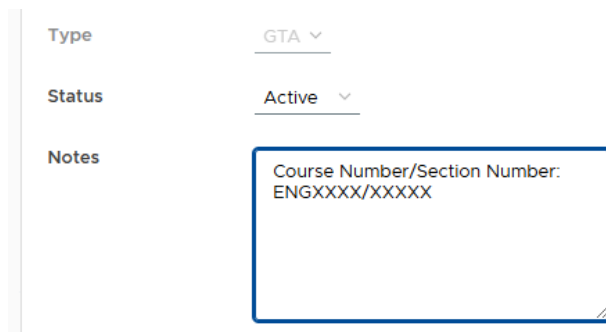


Please visit the confluence page regarding the entry processes that are listed in the "About this app" section found in the settings menu of the app. It is important to access the page via this route to ensure you are following the guide maintained by our office.



Part of the instructions will require uploading both the student's signed (accepted) award letter and the signed position expectations form (if utilized) to the student's assistantship entry within the app. Please note that entry into the app will not immediately trigger the application of any waivers. The next step (SPAFs) must also be completed before a student will be granted any waivers.

For GTA and GTA-IORs: Indicate the course number and section number (CRN) of the course the student is assigned to in the "Notes" section of the student's assistantship entry. In a non-IOR GTA is working with a specific faculty member for multiple courses during a specific semester, please indicate the faculty member name in the "Notes" section.



The screenshot shows a form with three main sections: 'Type', 'Status', and 'Notes'. The 'Type' field is a dropdown menu currently set to 'GTA'. The 'Status' field is a dropdown menu currently set to 'Active'. The 'Notes' field is a text area containing the placeholder text 'Course Number/Section Number: ENGXXXX/XXXXX'.

Student Personnel Action Forms

Departments are responsible for processing Student Personnel Action Forms (SPAF) for graduate assistantship positions. This form must be initiated electronically via DocuSign; the process is managed by Human Resources. Please direct all questions regarding the form to their office. Also, the award letter and the optional position expectations form should not be attached to the SPAF in DocuSign. Since the SPAF is managed by HR, the attachments are not stored in the Office of Graduate Studies's form retention system. The award letters and the optional position expectations form should be uploaded in the Graduate Assistantship app only.

The Office of Graduate Studies must be included in the approval process of the personnel action forms for **all** actions involving a graduate assistantship position. All graduate assistantship appointments require a Student Personnel Action Form to be processed for the student's position to be active and for any matriculation and/or out-of-state fee waiver to be approved.

The Office of Graduate Studies permits initial assistantships to begin no earlier than one pay period prior to the first day of the assigned semester. Please refer to the academic calendar (available online) and the Fiscal Year Payroll Calendar (available on the university's Payroll department's website) to determine these exact dates. Graduate Teaching Assistants - Instructor of Record (9185) that are FLSA exempt and paid on a salaried basis must follow the dates of the academic term.

All assistantship appointments must also have an end date on the Student Personnel Action Form at the time of the appointment. Academic departments have the option of submitting one SPAF for the fall and spring semesters combined or one per semester. Regardless of the start date, the ending date must be no later than the last day of the spring semester. Please refer to the academic calendar to determine this date. Appointments ending in the fall should have an ending date of no later than the day before the spring semester begins.

A separate Student Personnel Action Form should be processed for summer appointments. These appointments can begin as early as the day after the last day of the spring semester and can extend as late as the day before the first day of the fall semester. Please refer to the academic calendar to determine these dates.

Note: Appointments may not extend past the graduation date for the graduate student.

For the student to receive the full matriculation waiver, the student must begin no later than the first day of the semester they are receiving the waiver for and end no earlier than the last day of that academic semester.

The exception to this is for assistantships assigned to a grant or if a course runs less than the full academic semester (GTAs and GTA-IORs), as previously discussed.

- If the grant has a start date following the first day of the semester or an ending date prior to the end of the academic semester, the assistantship dates would start or end accordingly (e.g. Grant begins on September 10th but the academic semester began on August 25th, the SPAF would have a start date of September 10th and end on the last day of the fall or spring semester. If the grant ends on November 30th, the SPAF would start with the first day of the semester and end on November 30th). The department should notate the SPAF that the position is starting late or ending early due to the grant start or end dates. These circumstances will not penalize the student.

The hiring department will initiate the Student Personnel Action Form for each graduate assistantship. For Academic departments, the SPAFs will route to the College Dean's office for a signature from the Business Manager or their designated approver. If the assistantship position is working on a grant, the SPAF will need to be signed by a representative from the Research Administration and Engagement office. The final reviewer and approver prior to Human Resources must be the Office of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies will review all items related to the assistantship program requirements (student's eligibility, anticipated graduation information, degree plan, award letter, optional position expectation form, Graduate Assistantship app entry, the details of the SPAF, etc.) prior to approving the SPAF for processing. Once the form is approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, it will continue to Human Resources for their process.

Processing Waivers

Academic Departments: For recordkeeping purposes, the College Deans' offices supervise the processing of graduate matriculation waivers allocated to graduate assistants. Please contact the College Dean's offices for further information, questions, or concerns regarding who is responsible for each of the steps referenced above.

Non-Academic Departments: Offices within the Division of Academic Engagement and Student Affairs (DAESA) and Intercollegiate Athletics should contact their division's office to determine the steps for processing waivers. All other academic departments will work with the Office of Graduate Studies to process the waivers. This includes the Graduate Assistantship app entries.

Graduate Assistantship Evaluations

At the end of each semester, graduate assistantships of all classifications are to be evaluated by their supervisor. The evaluation rates performance on work assignments, in communication skills, and more. The supervisor should complete the evaluation and meet with the student to discuss the overall performance rating and any areas that may need improvement. The Office of Graduate Studies has created a fillable evaluation form for this step. Please utilize the [GA Performance Evaluation](#) form to complete this requirement.

Graduate Teaching Assistants – Instructors of Record (9185) are subject to an additional evaluation. GTA-IORs will be evaluated by a Student Assessment of Instruction (SAI) administered to students at the end of each semester through MyUWF. This evaluation method will satisfy the performance evaluation requirement.

Assistantship Dismissal

Causes for Assistantship Dismissal

All students with a graduate assistantship must maintain a good academic standing with a cumulative (overall) graduate GPA of 3.0 for master's-level students and 3.25 for specialist and doctoral-level students. Inability to maintain good academic standing with the University may result in academic dismissal. If the overall GPA places a student outside of good academic standing, they will automatically be placed on academic probation and be ineligible to maintain or renew their graduate assistantship.

All graduate assistantship students must make satisfactory progress towards their degree. Satisfactory progress is determined on a case-by-case basis by the student's program director or coordinator. If it is determined that satisfactory progress is not being made, even if the student is meeting other minimum requirements (i.e., GPA and continuous enrollment status), the graduate student may lose their assistantship.

All students with a graduate assistantship must be registered for a minimum of 6 graduate-level credit hours in the fall and spring semesters and 3 graduate-level credit hours in the summer semester. Withdrawing from one or more courses and falling below the minimum credit hour requirement will cause the graduate student to lose their assistantship.

If a student is placed on academic probation because of an "I" grade, they will not be eligible for a graduate assistantship. It is imperative that faculty and graduate assistants are aware of the policies regarding the consequences of not resolving "I" grades and take measures to resolve Incompletes before they convert to "Fs." An "I" grade may adversely affect the student's GPA and will result in ineligibility for the assistantship. For more information, see the Office of the Registrar's Policy on Incomplete Grades.

In addition, departments reserve discretion over the reappointment of graduate assistantships. Each department or office offering graduate assistantships should provide the following information to graduate students receiving assistantship awards, whether through a letter or a departmental orientation session:

- evaluation procedures;
- procedures and criteria for reappointment; and

- conditions under which an assistantship could be terminated.

Every department or office is responsible for forming its own guidelines for graduate assistantship positions. These guidelines may include, but are not limited to, dress code, absence/tardy policy, and causes for dismissal other than those referenced above.

Processing Early Terminations or Resignations

In the case that a student resigns or is dismissed from their assistantship position before the end of the semester, they are required to pay back a prorated portion of their matriculation waiver and out-of-state fee waiver, if received. Please email gradassistantship@uwf.edu to notify the Office of Graduate Studies of the planned last day of employment as soon as you learn of the change to the position. The Office of Graduate Studies will update the Graduate Assistantship app and provide the amount of the prorated waiver to the department. The amount due will be directly applied to the students' account and they will be responsible for paying the balance owed according to the timeline outlined by the Student Accounts office. **The department is required to notify the student of the amount they will be required to repay and let them know the amount will be posted to their student account.**

If the hiring department determines there is a valid reason the student should not have to repay the prorated waiver, they may submit a [Request to Waive Repayment of GA Tuition Waiver](#). Approval is required from the Dean of the college that issued the waiver and the Office of Graduate Studies has the ultimate decision to approve the waiver. Please note that the requirement to repay the waiver will be considered on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances that justify the waiver.

The department must initiate a Student Personnel Action Form (SPAF) to end the students' appointment. The "ending date" should correspond with the date the resignation/dismissal went into effect (i.e. the student's last working day).