






JSU GRADUATE STUDIES

Graduate Assistantship Guide

Policies and Procedures for Hiring a
Graduate Assistant

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Purpose & Overview

Graduate Assistantships support the University in teaching, research, and service missions; helps establish a graduate culture within academic units; and provides financial assistance, and enhanced educational and developmental opportunities for graduate students.

The assistantship program is designed to aid in the successful completion of the degree pursued and to enhance career opportunities through applied professional experiences. Compared to undergraduate student scholarships, the graduate assistantship program aims to recognize and reward the University's very best graduate students.

Graduate Studies provides administrative oversight to ensure compliance with institutional policies and procedures and parity among all academic graduate assistants.

Jacksonville State University awards approximately 80 graduate assistantships each fall and spring semester and approximately 25 graduate assistantships each summer, contingent upon funding.

Types of Assistantships

In addition to a stipend, graduate assistantships carry a scholarship of 6-9 semester hours of graduate tuition and the general university fee. The following types of assistantships are offered depending on the needs of the academic and academic support units within the university, available university funds, and the qualifications of the individual graduate student.

Graduate Administrative Assistant (GAA)

A Graduate Administrative Assistant (GAA) assists administrative staff with collecting, organizing, and analyzing various types of data or information, assist with special projects and other duties assigned by the unit's supervisor and/or appropriate faculty and/or staff. *Stipend: Max of \$2,380 per semester; \$7.25 per hour with a max of 20 hours per week for a total of 16 weeks. Student compensation is based on the number of hours worked, and students must clock in and clock out for each shift. Biweekly payroll over the course of the term.

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)

A Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) assists a faculty member or members with academic research that may involve data collection and analysis, lab and field experiments, computer programming, preparation of reports or presentations, or other comparable duties.

*Stipend: Max of \$2,380 per semester; \$7.25 per hour with a max of 20 hours per week for a total of 16 weeks.. Student compensation is based on the number of hours worked, and students must clock in and clock out for each shift. Biweekly payroll over the course of the term.

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)

A Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) assists faculty by teaching lower level courses or labs; developing teaching materials; and preparing and grading examinations, papers, or other student work. The GTAs must be assigned to and responsible for teaching a credit-bearing course and will be under the supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching field. A GTA's work with students will be closely supervised and must provide opportunities to gain teaching skills and a better grasp of the academic discipline. The supervising faculty member is responsible for overseeing the assignment of all grades to students in the courses.

*Stipend: \$4,000 paid in 4 monthly installments over the course of a fall or spring semester, or paid in 3 monthly installments over the course of a summer semester. Max of 20 hours per week for total of 16 weeks on a monthly pay cycle.

Student Eligibility

Graduate Assistantship Eligibility Requirements

- Must be classified and enrolled as a degree-seeking graduate student at JSU during the assistantship semester.
- Must be actively enrolled in required coursework towards the degree. The Graduate Assistantship will not pay for courses that are not in the degree program requirements in the Graduate Catalog. *If a student is required to take undergraduate courses for the graduate degree (foundation courses, undergraduate deficiency courses, etc.), the Graduate Assistantship will only pay for these courses if they are documented as required courses via memo from the student's advisor to the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- Must hold the minimum required GPA for the student's enrolled graduate degree program.
- During the assistantship semester, must be enrolled at JSU in six to nine (6-9) graduate semester hours in a fall or spring semester or six to nine (6-9) graduate semester hours in a full summer term. (Full summer term = May, June, and July).
- Must not be holding another campus job.
- If the student has previously held a Graduate Assistantship position at JSU, the student must have fulfilled all duties and complied with all policies to be considered for another Graduate Assistantship.
- It should be noted that the graduate assistantship tuition scholarship may affect the amount of federal financial aid for which students are eligible. The graduate assistant will be responsible for determining if there is any impact on eligibility of other financial aid programs.
- Must complete FERPA training, Sexual Harassment training, and other training as required through JSU.

International Student Applicants

- All international students must receive clearance for employment from International House and Programs.
- Due to Visa requirements, international students must be enrolled as a full-time JSU graduate student and possess each of the following:
 - a. Passport from their respective country.
 - b. F-1 Student Status or J-1 Student Status.
 - c. U.S. Customs Form I-94.
 - d. Official photo identification.
 - e. Official Social Security Card imprinted with "not valid for work without authorization" or similar statement.

International Student Enrollment Requirements

- International students will be required to enroll as full time students with at least nine credit hours each semester. At least six of those hours must be taken in traditional or web-assisted/hybrid format, if the student plans to reside in the United States. Our graduate classes are scheduled to accommodate this requirement, and it is the university's expectation that all students abide by this law. Failure to do so will result in termination of the student's immigration record.
- International graduate students with prerequisite/foundation/deficiency courses must maintain at least 12 semester credit hours at all times. The classes can be a combination of undergraduate and graduate courses. International students must have at least nine semester credit hours of traditional or web-assisted/hybrid classes (non-online courses) out of a total of 12 credit hours.
- International students are required to carry health and repatriation insurance.
- Government sponsored students, such as Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM) Scholarship, Embassy of Kuwait Scholarship, and Embassy of UAE Scholarship students, etc., will have to check with their embassy and/or government before enrolling in any number of online courses.

GA Approval Process



Departmental approval of the number of graduate assistantship positions and available funding for each semester is at the discretion of the Academic Dean for each academic college. It is the responsibility of the academic department to discuss the availability of funding prior to submitting any job posting or discussing graduate assistantship positions with potential student employees.

Once funding has been approved, the departmental hiring authority can move forward with posting the position through Human Resources.

Please note that the budget number for funding will be required with the position posting.

Hiring Process



Creating a Position Requisition

For directions on creating a requisition, please visit the HR Website and find instructions under the Helpful links and Forms Page. Directions can be found under the Hiring Section of the webpage. All positions will be approved by Graduate Studies prior to being posted to the website.

<https://www.jsu.edu/hr/forms-and-links/index.html>



Interview and Hire

Units will perform their in-house review and selection of applicants for hire. Once an applicant has been chosen for hire, you must change the applicant's status on the job posting in PageUp. Directions for changing a candidate's status can be found under the Hiring Section of the webpage.

<https://www.jsu.edu/hr/forms-and-links/index.html>



Submit Graduate Assistantship Contract

Units will perform their in-house review and selection of applicants for hire. Once the applicant has been transitioned to the selected for hire status in the HR system, it is the hiring authorities responsibility to begin the contract for routing. Contracts can be found on the Graduate Studies webpage. Students are not eligible to begin work until the contract has gone through all channels and payroll has signed off.

<https://www.jsu.edu/graduate/assistantships/index.html>



Schedule Student to Attend Orientation

All Graduate Assistantships are required to attend the orientation at the beginning of their contract for each academic year. Students who do not attend will not be eligible to begin work unless prior permission has been granted by the Dean or Assistant Director of Graduate Studies. Orientation dates will be listed on the Graduate Studies webpage.



Evaluation Process

Evaluation

Graduate Studies supervisors are required to complete a Graduate Assistantship evaluation form for each student employee within the academic department. Upon completion of the evaluation, the supervisor will review the results of the evaluation with the Graduate Assistant. All evaluations must be submitted no more than one week after the end of a semester. If a student's performance is determined to be unsatisfactory by the employing academic unit, this may be grounds for termination.

Termination

A graduate assistantship contract may be terminated by the unit in which it is housed and/or by the Dean of Graduate Studies prior to the end of the appointment period for any of the following reasons:

- The student is no longer enrolled in Graduate Studies.
- The student does not meet the eligibility requirements outlined by the Graduate Assistantship Program.
- The student does not adhere to deadlines and/or procedures outlined in the Graduate Assistantship Program or otherwise communicated to the student.
- The student does not fulfill all assigned duties.
- The student's performance is determined to be unsatisfactory by the employing academic unit.
- The student is repeatedly absent or tardy.
- The student violates any university policies, rules, or Codes of Conduct.

Graduate Studies must be notified in writing upon termination of any Graduate Assistant.

Rights and Responsibilities

The Graduate Assistant will be notified in writing of all decisions that affect his or her status as an assistant by the assigned unit. This includes advance notifications of evaluation procedures and a summary of the evaluation by the assigned unit.

It is important to resolve, as early as possible, any disagreement which may arise between assistants and supervisors. Should a problem arise in the work assignment, the Graduate Assistant has the right to initiate a grievance or to appeal a decision through the specified channels.

The student shall first inform the unit supervisor of the problem and attempt to resolve the grievance in an informal manner. If the matter cannot be resolved in an informal manner, the following formal grievance procedure is to be followed:

- If the grievance is not resolved in discussion with the immediate supervisor, a formal, written complaint is filed with the unit director/department head within five (5) working days after the conference described above. The unit director/department head must give a written decision on the grievance, within five (5) working days after receipt of the complaint.
- If the grievance is not resolved by this decision, a written appeal may be filed with the Dean of Graduate Studies no later than ten (10) working days of receipt of the unit director/department head's decision on the grievance. The final decision lies with the Dean of Graduate Studies.