

## University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Policy on Graduate Assistants

An OUHSC, OU-Norman or OU-Tulsa graduate student enrolled in an MS or PhD degree program can be appointed as a Graduate Assistant by the Graduate College. The primary responsibility of a GA is participation in the research and teaching effort of the department or program. The work effort must contribute to the graduate professional education of the student and to fulfilling the requirements for the graduate degree.

Graduate Assistants in the Graduate College are categorized as Graduate Assistants, (GAs), Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs). These categories are defined according to the emphasis placed on the student's responsibilities.

**Graduate Assistant** - The primary responsibility is participation in work effort that contributes to the educational process and development of the student. For a new student, GA appointments may begin no earlier than their first day of class at OUHSC.

**Graduate Research Assistant** - The primary responsibility is participation in the research effort of the department and the graduate program. The work effort must be related to and should contribute to fulfilling requirements for completing the degree. For a new student, GRA appointments may begin no earlier than their first day of class at OUHSC.

**Graduate Teaching Assistant** - The primary responsibility is in the teaching effort of the department and contributes to the development of the student. For a new student, GTA appointments may begin no earlier than one week prior to their first day of class at OUHSC. This is to allow the GTA to work with the instructor in preparation for the class in which they are assisting.

**To be appointed a GA, GRA or GTA the student must meet the following requirements:**

- The student must be enrolled as a full-time student at OUHSC, OU-Norman, or OU-Tulsa. Full-time enrollment for a Graduate Assistant is defined as 6 credit hours for Fall and Spring semesters and 3 credit hours for the Summer term.
- The student must be appointed for 10 - 20 hours per week (0.25 to 0.50 FTE) to their assigned work as a GA, GRA or GTA.
- The work the student is being appointed for must be related to their program of study.
- The student must receive a minimum stipend of \$500 per calendar month. The Graduate College will determine the maximum amount that can be earned annually. Students may not receive a stipend that exceeds the annually established maximum without prior approval of the Dean of their college.

Non-resident GAs, GRAs, and GTAs are eligible for a non-resident tuition waiver in accordance with Oklahoma State Regents Policy. A student must be appointed a GA, GRA, or GTA by the first day of class to be eligible to receive a non-resident waiver for that semester. Resident tuition waivers are awarded at the discretion of the department where the appointment is held. The department must notify the Graduate College of the appointment for the waiver to be applied.

The Internal Revenue Service grants student status to all GAs, GRAs, and GTAs enrolled for a minimum of half-time. Half-time enrollment for IRS purposes is 5 credit hours for Fall and Spring semesters and 2 credit hours for the Summer semester. If the enrollment drops below this minimum, he or she must be reclassified as an employee and will no longer be considered a GA, GRA, or GTA.

### **Appointment Outside Student's Primary Graduate Department**

If the GA, GRA, or GTA appointment is for work experience with a Graduate College faculty or senior administrative staff member who does not hold a Graduate College faculty appointment in the primary department from which the student will receive his/her degree, the information outlined below must be provided to the Chair of the student's degree granting department. The Chair will review this information. Following review by the Chair, if the decision is to support the appointment, a recommendation with the supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Graduate College Dean. The Graduate College Dean will review the materials to determine if the work experience is directly related to the program of study and degree requirements. If the work experience is not directly associated with the program of study, the individual will not qualify for the appointment.

For OUHSC graduate students seeking an appointment as a GA, GRA, or GTA outside their degree granting department: Their appointment will be in their primary (degree-granting) department even though the department in which the project is funded will provide the stipend support. The appointment paperwork should originate from the primary department and include the signature of the Chair. The appointment must meet all requirements, policies and procedures defined by the primary department for GA, GRA, and GTA appointments.

For Norman graduate students seeking an appointment as a GA, GRA, or GTA on the OUHSC campus: Their appointment will be in the department providing the stipend. The appointment paperwork should originate from the department providing the stipend and include the signature of the degree granting department Chair.

The form [Authorization for Graduate Assistant Appointment outside Student's Primary Graduate Department](#) must be completed, signed, and submitted to the Graduate College, as well as the required letters listed on the form. All instructions are stated on the form.