MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

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GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP GUIDELINES
2012 - 2013

Overview

Graduate assistantships serve as the primary means of support for many graduate students, enabling them to work toward their degrees and grow professionally while providing the University the benefit of high-quality services at reasonable cost. The graduate assistant is both student and employee, and is expected to perform well academically and to meet teaching, research, and/or service obligations.

Eligibility

To be eligible for an assistantship, students must be admitted to a graduate program at MSU, have earned a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, and must be enrolled for a minimum of six hours of graduate coursework each semester they hold an assistantship (three hours for the summer). An assistant may not enroll in more than 13 credit hours during the semester. No course overloads will be approved for graduate assistants. Any student who is in his/her last semester of graduate study may be permitted to hold an assistantship with only three hours of coursework if a statement from the department accompanies the Graduate Assistant's PA (GAPA). Non-resident graduate assistants receive the equivalent of in-state tuition during the semesters in which they are actively on a graduate assistantship.

All graduate assistants should be classified as 'exempt' status and be employed for 20 hours per week. Due to changes in KERS retirement policies a graduate assistant may not hold an hourly on-campus job in addition to their graduate assistantship. However, a graduate student may work up to 25 hours per week on a Graduate Assistant PA if extra compensation is provided to the student. International students are limited to 20 hours per week while enrolled in classes per federal guidelines. No graduate student may hold an assistantship for more than four semesters (excluding summers).

It is preferable that GAPA's be processed for the whole academic year, however, they may be processed for one semester at a time or prorated if circumstances warrant. Grant funded graduate assistantship assignments and subsequent GAPA's should reflect the dates of the grant. Make sure you are aware of any students graduating in December and process a Fall only GAPA.

		GAPA Due *(or upon date of hire)*
Full Year	August 20, 2012 – May 11, 2013	August 1
Fall Only	August 20, 2012 – December 14, 2012 (16 Weeks)	August 1
Spring Only	January 14, 2013 –May 11, 2013 (16 Weeks)	December 1
Summer 2013	May 13, 2013 -August 16, 2013 (14 weeks)* **	May 1

*GA's working less than the time frames above may be prorated for the number of weeks worked.
**A GA may not work beyond his/her date of graduation.

The University Graduate Coordinator should be notified immediately of any GA resignation or termination and a GAPA should be immediately processed in order to stop the GA stipend. The department is responsible for initiating the resignation/termination papers and is also responsible for the payment of the GA if the paperwork is delayed. Please be sure the line for resignation/termination is clearly identified.

Graduate Assistantship Categories

The University has four categories of graduate assistantships: Teaching, Research, Academic, and Public Service (mark Administrative on current GAPA). Each GA should be required to perform a level of work consistent with that of a graduate student and be assigned at least 20 hours a week but no more than 25.

- **Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA's)** who qualify are responsible for the primary instruction of a course or lab as well as the responsibilities that accompany that primary assignment such as grading papers, meeting with students, etc. Hours shall be devoted to instruction as defined below:
    - Each GTA is eligible for a $500.00 tuition reimbursement per semester from the Office of the Provost.
    - GTA's are also eligible for an additional $500 stipend per semester if they are primary instructor for a course or laboratory. These funds are added by the University Graduate Coordinator.
    - All GTA's must be shown as class/lab primary or secondary instructor of record, and have the following submitted with the PA: a schedule correction showing the course/lab, a current resume, and a transcript or MAP report showing at least 18 graduate hours completed in the discipline of instruction.
    - All GTA's must be assigned following the *Faculty Handbook* language relative to teaching assignments as shown below.

Appropriate Course Level Graduate Teaching Assistant Assignment:

CATEGORY E: GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS WITH MORE THAN 18 GRADUATE HOURS
Levels 000-599 Courses, 000-599 Laboratories
Graduate teaching assistants in this category must hold a 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. Category E graduate teaching assistants may be assigned primary teaching responsibility for introductory courses in the discipline, usually those at the 100 level.

CATEGORY F: GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS WITH FEWER THAN 18 GRADUATE HOURS
Levels—Only Laboratory and Breakout Sections Numbered 000-599
Graduate teaching assistants with fewer than 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline may assist in teaching, or be assigned secondary teaching responsibility for laboratory and breakout sections. All students in this category must be enrolled in good standing in an appropriate graduate program in the discipline and hold a bachelor's degree in or related to the discipline. Students must also be supervised by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, have regular in-service training, and undergo planned and periodic evaluations.

- **Research Assistants** assist professors in academic research, while perhaps also conducting their own projects.

- **Academic Assistants** assist in the duties of an academic area and/or assigned to a faculty member. Duties may include assisting a faculty member in a course, helping to grade papers or proctor tests, preparing materials for classes, meeting with students, assisting or conducting projects and workshops, etc.

- **Public Service Assistants** assist campus personnel in a particular area of expertise in providing a service to the public (i.e., local, regional, or state; economic, civic, non-profit, Regional Outreach, or campus based).

Compensation

The compensation of a graduate assistant will vary from department to department depending on available funds. All assistantships should be no less than the minimums shown below. In addition to the department funding a graduate assistant, the university centrally provides "Graduate Advancement Funds" appropriated by the Office of the Provost to enhance GA salaries on a first come first serve basis each year. Graduate Advancement Funds do not follow the GA line for next fiscal year budgeting. They must be reallocated by the University Graduate Coordinator each fiscal year. Funds will be allocated based on the amount of salary paid each semester from the departmental/collegiate/school accounts as noted in the following schedule and will be applied by BTR to the FOAPAL given on the PA at a later date. If a student is receiving money from the Office of the Provost for teaching or other special circumstances, please indicate that in the "remarks" section of the GAPA. A student may be receiving a tuition scholarship or another award determined by the University Graduate Coordinator.

Funding Provided by the Department/College/School	GAF Added	Total Stipend Semester/Year
Full Academic Year GA - $5,000 (Minimum per year)	$1,000 (GAF = 20% of Total)	$6,000
Full Academic Year GA - $5,600 (Optimal Level)	$1,400 (GAF = 25% of Total)	$7,000
Fall Semester GA - $2,500 (Minimum per semester)	$500 (GAF = 20% of Total)	$3,000
Fall Semester GA - $2,800 (Optimal Level)	$700 (GAF = 25% of Total)	$3,500
Spring Semester GA - $2,500 (Minimum per semester)	$500 (GAF = 20% of Total)	$3,000
Spring Semester GA - $2,800 (Optimal Level)	$700 (GAF = 25% of Total)	$3,500
Summer 2013 GA - $2,500 (Minimum) $1,250 May 13-June 30/$1,250 July 1-August 16)	$650 (GAF = 26% of Total)	$3,150
Summer 2013 GA - $2,800 (Optimal Level)	$750 (GAF = 27% of Total)	$3,550

Departments/colleges/schools may pay a graduate assistant more than the minimum/optimal per semester qualifying the GA for a higher percentage of Graduate Advancement Funds. The semester based pay in Box 16 (Pay Rate) should only reflect the amount of funds you as a unit intend to expend out of your account(s) for payroll. Any monies expected to be added by the Office of the Provost should be noted in Box 24 (Remarks). Tuition adjustments will automatically be processed by our office. These floors/minimums do not apply to non-university privately funded GA's. However, if privately funded positions are being cost shared (C.S.) with any university funds, then the university C.S. portion of the grant would be eligible for a percentage of "Graduate Advancement Funds" as a supplement.

Exempt payroll (following the university's monthly payroll schedule) will be made in four equal monthly payments each semester. Fall pay will be September, October, November, and December; Spring is January, February, March, and April. Summer pay is made in May, June, July, and August. The pay schedule can be viewed on myGate.

African-American Graduate Assistantship Cost Share (60/40 Program)

If your unit has an African-American graduate student who is a qualified resident from the regional area, and the unit would like to share in the cost of funding an assistantship for the student with the Office of the Provost, please contact Amber DuVentre at 809-5304.

Listing of Graduate Students Interested in an Assistantship

The Office of the Provost receives resumes of graduate students seeking assistantships throughout the year. If your department is seeking a graduate assistant and you are unable to identify an individual as a candidate, please contact Amber DuVentre at 809-5304 to review a list of applications.

GAPA Processing

GAPA's should be originated in the departmental/collegiate/school office and hand delivered to the Office of the Provost for approval and processing by the University Graduate Coordinator. Make sure GAPA's are complete and signed by the department chair/supervisor and dean/director. Incomplete GAPA's will require additional processing time.

An I9 Form and a Background Check must be completed and on file in Student Employment **prior to the beginning of work**. A student should not be allowed to work until you receive notification from Student Employment (the effective date of action on the GA- PA should reflect this authorization).

Please confirm the student's GPA prior to submitting a GAPA. This will enable you to prepare a written request of a waiver of GPA requirement (if you wish to make that request). All graduate assistants should have a cumulative 3.0 GPA. If at all possible, colleges/schools and departments should give preference to students who meet or exceed MSU's requirements.

If a student resides out of state, or is international, please mark "out of state" on the GAPA. The marking of "out of state" allows us to know which students need adjustments to their bills.

Please remember to include the position number on the GAPA. This is needed to BTR any funds to your department's account from Academic Affairs. Accounting assigns these numbers. Call Accounting at 809-4214 for an assignment of a position # to the FOAPAL before submitting the PA.

All GA's are required to complete FERPA Training that is available on myGate.

General questions related to GA processing may be directed to Donna Miller at 809-3567
Academic-oriented questions may be directed to Dr. Jay Morgan, Associate Provost, at 809-3027