

TYPES OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The University recognizes three types of Graduate Assistants:

1. A **Graduate Assistant (GA)** will not be considered the teacher of record. The GA will be paid from Instructional Funds. The GA will work in direct support of instruction and will assist students on a daily basis. The primary purpose of the graduate assistant should not be to do filing and clerical work. Graduate Assistants will be subject to all other policies concerning Graduate Assistants.
2. A **Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)** will be employed as the teacher of record. As the teacher of record, the GTA is responsible for assigning final grades. Work units are determined in the same way as for a regular faculty member. For the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), the teaching assignment should provide an opportunity for obtaining a depth of knowledge within the academic discipline. The Graduate Teaching Assistant is assigned undergraduate courses to teach. Exceptions to this policy are made only with the approval of the Dean of Graduate School.

A GTA who is working toward a master's degree may be assigned to teach undergraduate courses only. A GTA who holds a master's degree and is working toward the doctoral degree may be assigned to teach undergraduate courses. Only under extremely unusual circumstances or in cases of demonstrated expertise or experience may a GTA, working toward the doctorate, be assigned to teach master's level courses. This arrangement must be reviewed and approved in advance by the Dean of the Graduate School. A GTA may not be assigned to teach doctoral-level courses. An exception at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School may be made in the case of GTAs who have demonstrated exceptional expertise or experience. The GTA is required to document all student contact hours.

3. A **Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)** is employed in conjunction with the research of a faculty member in a capacity that enhances the student's career and educational development. For the GRA, the research project may ideally result in a professional paper, thesis, or dissertation. Duties vary depending on the type of research project and may include laboratory experiments, library searches, data entry, preparation of reports, and other relevant assignments. The primary purpose of the GRA should not be to do filing and clerical work.

Graduate Research Assistant - Advanced

(Additional positions in the GRA Category.)

The Graduate Council, working in conjunction with the staff in the Office of Human Resources, created (in addition to the Graduate Research Assistant positions already in place) additional levels of pay and titles for new categories of graduate student research positions. These titles and categories were added in order to provide more competitive stipends for those research positions that require skills, training, and ability above what would normally be expected for a Graduate Research Assistant. The purpose of these positions is to allow the faculty member whose research project demands a special or advanced level of knowledge or experience the opportunity to employ graduate students possessing these skills and also to facilitate the objectives of the graduate education of students as they apply their special skills and knowledge.

In order for a graduate student to be appointed to one of these higher-level positions, the faculty advisor, chair, or dean should:

Prepare a Personnel Transaction Form and send it with the following:

1. a position description (if the position is funded by a grant, a copy of the position description in the grant may be sent; otherwise, a description should be written);
2. the student's vita; and
3. a letter stating the applicant's qualifications and why this person's particular skills are needed for this position.