

**University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center**  
**Graduate College**  
**Policy on Graduate Assistants in the Graduate College**

A graduate student enrolled in an M.S. or Ph.D. degree program can be appointed as a Graduate Assistant (GA) 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 must contribute to the graduate/professional education of the student and to fulfillment of requirements for the graduate degree.

Graduate Assistants are categorized as Graduate Assistants, (GA's), Graduate Research Assistants (GRA's) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA's). These categories are defined according to the student's responsibilities.

GAs, GRAs, and GTAs may be 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 in order to receive a non-resident tuition waiver for that semester.*

The Internal Revenue Service grants student status to all GA's, GRA's, and GTA's with half-time enrollment. IRS defines half-time enrollment as 5 credit hours for fall and spring semesters and 2 credit hours for the summer semester. If the enrollment drops below this, the student must be reclassified as an employee and will no longer be considered a GA, GRA, or GTA.

**Graduate Assistant** - The primary responsibility is participation in work that contributes to the educational process and development of the student.

**Graduate Research Assistant** - The primary responsibility is participation in the research effort of the department and graduate program. The work must contribute to fulfilling requirements for completing the degree.

**Graduate Teaching Assistant** - The primary responsibility is the teaching effort of the department and its contribution to student development.

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

1. Student must be enrolled full-time. Full-time enrollment for a GA is defined as 6 credit hours for fall and spring semesters and 3 credit hours for the summer term.
2. Appointed to work 10 - 20 hours per week (0.25 to 0.50 FTE).
3. Work appointed for must be related to the program of study.
4. Student must receive a minimum stipend of \$500 per calendar month. The Graduate College determines 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.

## **GA Appointment Outside Student's Degree-Granting Department**

If the GA, GRA, or GTA appointment is with a faculty member who does not hold an appointment in the student's degree-granting department, the **hiring** department should initiate the GA Authorization Form found online at [http://www.ouhsc.edu/graduate/Forms/GA\\_AppointmentAuthorizationForm.pdf](http://www.ouhsc.edu/graduate/Forms/GA_AppointmentAuthorizationForm.pdf). If the chair supports the appointment, completed documents should be forwarded to the Graduate College dean who will approve the appointment if the work experience is directly related to the program of study and degree requirements.

The GA, GRA, or GTA appointment will be in the hiring department. The appointment must meet all requirements, policies and procedures defined by the degree-granting department for GA, GRA, and GTA appointments in the department.

The following documentation is included on the authorization form:

- 1) A detailed description of duties and how they are related to the program of study.
- 2) Description of the purpose and scope of the project on which the student would work.
- 3) Identification of the department and college where the project is located.
- 4) Identification of the faculty member who supervises the work and definition of the faculty member's association with the primary department and/or education.
- 5) List of skills that will be developed or learned that are directly related to the graduate program objectives.
- 6) Statement by student addressing how this experience will enhance the student's career objectives, including specific and measurable outcomes (i.e., professional presentations, publications, etc.).
- 7) Statement by the supervising faculty member confirming the scope of the work, its relevance to the program of study, the stipend amount and percent time appointed.

Approved 04/06/04