<u>**GRADUATE ASSISTANT POLICY**</u>

<u>**Approved by Administrative Council**</u>

<u>**Effective date: 8/2/2017**</u>

1. Appointment Criteria and Categories for Awarding Assistantships

Students must be in good academic standing (not on probation) and have the permission of their degree program to hold an assistantship. In addition, they cannot exceed their program's limitation on the number of hours to be worked. Students must be eligible to work in the United States and cannot exceed any hourly limitations placed on them by a visa. All graduate assistants must meet the university's required minimum enrollment for students with assistantships (see Section 10 below).

All graduate assistants must receive training appropriate to their position, including in such areas as FERPA, Title IX etcetera.

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)

Graduate research assistants are graduate students conducting academically significant research under the direction of a faculty member, who may be a regular teaching faculty member or a principal investigator on an external grant or contract. Any student accepted into a graduate degree program may be appointed, depending on credentials, such as (1) admission test scores, (2) grade point averages in previous course work or in the degree program, (3) previous experience, and (4) the nature of the work for which the assistantship is funded.

Graduate Administrative Assistant (GAA)

Graduate administrative assistants are graduate students who provide academic and program support. GAA responsibilities are administrative in nature and consist of duties unrelated directly to teaching or research. Any student accepted into a graduate degree program may be appointed as a GAA.

Graduate Computing Assistant (GCA)

Graduate computing assistants are graduate students who provide computer and technology support for academic units, programs, and labs. Any student accepted into a graduate degree program may be appointed depending on required credentials, such as (1) admission test scores, (2) grade point averages in previous course work or in the degree program, (3) previous experience, and (4) the nature of the work for which the assistantship is funded.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Level A (GTAA)

Graduate students holding GTAA appointments may not have a primary responsibility for a course, but may serve as discussion leaders in breakout sections, grade papers, or assist the primary instructor of a course in other ways. GTAAs may also engage in a range of other instructional activities that are not tied to a specific course (e.g. proctoring for multiple courses, tutoring, advising). The dean, department chair or division director shall determine that the credentials of a student qualify the individual to undertake the work assignment.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Level B (GTAB)

Students appointed as a GTA Level B must have a baccalaureate degree and be enrolled in a graduate program and will have completed more than 18 hours of graduate course credit in the appropriate discipline. GTABs require approval by the university provost and chief academic officer, as the university president's designee, prior to assignment as the instructor of record for a course. The dean, department chair or division director shall determine that the credentials of a student qualify the individual to undertake the work assignment. GTABs must be under the general supervision of regular faculty members, and there must be a mentoring process in the department or division to assist them in their teaching activities. Non-native speakers of English appointed as GTABs must demonstrate English language proficiency.

2. Types of appointments

A graduate student may be appointed as a graduate assistant on a semester by semester basis, academic year basis, or on a month-to-month basis (annual). A semester by semester appointment begins on the first day of classes and ends on the last day of exams.

Graduate assistants who are employed on a month-to-month (annual) basis can begin work on any business day during the month. If a student is appointed on any day other than the 1st working day of the month, the monthly stipend amount will be pro-rated.

3. Employment Classification:

All graduate assistants are classified as exempt from the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Exempt work is performed by either (a) executives/administrators; or b) professionals, and is paid on a salaried basis regardless of the specific number of hours worked in a given week. Graduate Assistants perform work at the professional level, utilizing content knowledge that requires at least a bachelor's degree, and as a result are paid as exempt professionals. Graduate Assistants may not be engaged in work that is primarily or materially clerical, service/maintenance, trades/skilled crafts, or technical/paraprofessional, since such work must be classified as non-exempt under the FLSA and must be paid on an hourly basis for all hours worked, including overtime, if applicable.

A graduate assistant may not work or be paid as any other employment classification at any University System of Georgia institution during the same month in which they either worked or were paid as a graduate assistant.

4. Multiple Assistantships

Students generally may hold the equivalent of up to 50% FTE (approximately 20 hours per week). With the written approval of the student's dean, a student (except foreign national students) may be permitted to hold more than a 50% FTE. If a student consistently works at more than 50% FTE (i.e., more than 1300 hours per year), they could be considered a benefit eligible employee, and the department could be obligated to pay retroactive benefits.

5. Effort Commitment

One graduate assistantship is considered equivalent to 20% of a fulltime standard workweek. Please reference the scale below in order to determine the appropriate FTE. In order to comply with federal immigration laws, the university has defined a 20% FTE as 8 hours of work commitment for each week. The appointing department will arrange the specific work schedule for each appointment. A GTAB appointment may range between 20% and 30% FTE, depending on the size of the class, the course requirements, and other factors. The college or academic unit will determine the commitment of effort associated with teaching a given (normally 3 semester hour) course.

FTE	Average # hours/week	Total Number of Hours for Month-Month Graduate Assistants per Pay Block	Total # hours for Semester by Semester Graduate Assistant per Pay Block	# of Appointments
20%	8	140	120	1
25%	10	175	150	1.25
30%	12	210	180	125
35%	14	245	210	1.75
40%	16	280	240	2
45%	18	315	270	2.25
50%	20	350	300	2.5

Graduate assistant positions are exempt level work, work hours can vary per week depending on the needs of the position without affecting the graduate assistant's FTE. This table should be used as a guide to determine the appropriate FTE. Under no circumstances should a student on an F-1 or J-1 visa work more than 20 hours per week (50% FTE).

6. Course Enrollment

Students receiving assistantships for a given term must be enrolled during that term. The terms are Fall, Spring, and Summer (including Maymester). See section on Tuition Waiver for information concerning minimum enrollment to receive either a partial or full tuition waiver.

7. Pay Ranges

Pay rates may vary by student experience, funding source, discipline, and responsibilities specific of the appointment. Each semester a student can work no more than 2.5 appointments. Departments and/or colleges should establish fair pay scales. Units should monitor their pay practices for consistency across the unit.

8. Additional Compensation

In order for the university to track the work effort of graduate assistants, all work performed should be exempt level work and should be included in the FTE of graduate assistant appointments. If a graduate assistant performs work outside their regular duties, the college should determine the work effort (FTE) for the additional duties and process as graduate assistant pay. In no case should a graduate assistant exceed 50% FTE without written approval from the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled.

9. Pay Schedule

Each Semester will consist of 4 pay blocks for both the monthly (annual) and the semester by semester graduate assistantships.

Pay Block	Pay Dates—Last Business Day of
Annual	Each month
Fall	September, October, November and December
Spring	January, February, March and April
Maymester	May
Summer	June and July

Graduate Assistants whose payment information is not processed in time for the monthly pay cycle will be paid on the next available, biweekly payroll.

10. Reduced Tuition

Full tuition waiver:

To be eligible for a full tuition waiver, a student must:

• Have an appointment total of at least 20% FTE

• Meet university-wide credit hour enrollment minimums (12 credit hours each for fall and spring semesters & 9 credit hours for summer); colleges/schools may not set higher minimum credit hours)

• Total earnings of at least the minimum graduate assistant stipend ($2,000 each for fall and spring semesters; $1,000 for summer; or $5,000 per calendar year)

• Minimum stipends can be accomplished through appointments in more than one unit

• Enroll in mandatory health insurance program or provide proof of insurance

Partial (50%) tuition waiver:

To be eligible for a partial tuition waiver, a student must:

• Have an appointment total of at least a 20% FTE

• Meet part-time credit hour enrollment minimums (6 credit hours per academic term; 3 credit hours for summer)

• Earn at least the minimum graduate assistant stipend of $1,000 per fall and/or spring semester or $2,500 per calendar year or $500 in summer session

Policy Administration	
Responsible Office(s) (Office name, campus address, phone number)	The Graduate School 100 Auburn Avenue, Suite 308 404.413.2091
Responsible Executive(s):	Dean of the Graduate School

Policy Management	
Policy History Approval Date: Approving Body (if applicable): Revision Approved: Approving Body: 2nd Revision Approved: Approving Body:	 Originally approved 7/13/2006 Unknown 8/3/2017 Administrative Council 6/10/2020 Administrative Council

Web Links	
Procedures and forms (url)	