

Utah Tech University Policy

705: Graduate Assistantships



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I. Purpose

- 1.1 To establish the guiding principles, terms, and administrative authority for all graduate assistantships at Utah Tech University (“the University”).

II. Scope

- 2.1 Applies to all graduate faculty, programs, and departments involved with the awarding, supervision, and administration of graduate assistantships.

III. Definitions

- 3.1 ***Graduate Assistantship:*** Provides financial assistance to a degree-seeking graduate student through a mentored University employment experience. The general nature of a graduate assistantship is best described as an apprenticeship that consists of a work obligation and educational and developmental activities, all of which are integrated with the graduate degree program of the student. This work can be teaching, research, service, or a combination of these duties.
- 3.2 ***Teaching Graduate Assistantship:*** A graduate assistantship that focuses on teaching undergraduate courses.
- 3.3 ***Research Graduate Assistantship:*** A graduate assistantship that focuses on tasks related to research in a given field under the guidance of a professor.
- 3.4 ***Work Obligation:*** Work for the university that is assigned by the supervisor and for which the graduate assistant receives compensation in the form of wages.

- 3.5 ***Educational and Developmental Activities:*** Non-compensated activities in which the graduate assistant participates to meet degree requirements or enhance knowledge, skills, and scholarly or professional preparation.
- 3.6 ***Wages:*** The total taxable compensation to the graduate assistant for the work assigned by the supervisor.
- 3.7 ***Supervisor:*** The member of the Graduate Faculty with responsibility for assignment, direction, and evaluation of the work for which the graduate assistant receives compensation.
- 3.8 ***Program Advisor:*** The member of the Graduate Faculty with responsibility for advising the student on academic matters.

IV. Policy

4.1 Mentoring of Graduate Assistants

- 4.1.1 The primary mentors for the graduate assistant are the supervisor and the program advisor. Under the mentoring of the supervisor and advisor, a graduate assistant gains experience and learns scholarly, professional, and ethical behaviors appropriate to a field of study.
- 4.1.2 The supervisor and advisor may be different people or the same person. If the supervisor and advisor are different people, it is essential that they work together to provide consistent guidance to the graduate assistant.

4.2 Total Effort

- 4.2.1 The work done by the graduate assistant under the work obligation may be any combination of teaching, research, and service duties; and this combination of duties may vary over the contract period.
- 4.2.2 Educational and developmental activities for which the student is not compensated involve any form of course work, learning, study, instruction, training, research, creation, scholarship, or professional practice, which are integrated with the graduate degree program of the student.
 - 4.2.2.1 These activities may vary from graduate assistant to graduate assistant in a given program.
 - 4.2.2.2 These activities may or may not earn academic credit.

- 4.2.2.3 The University places no limits on the time spent by the graduate assistant on educational and developmental activities.
- 4.2.3 The University places limits on the number of hours assigned by the supervisor to the graduate assistant to satisfy the work obligation as defined by Policy 310.
 - 4.2.3.1 The supervisor and advisor must ensure that the combined demands of the work obligation and the educational and developmental activities are reasonable and do not impede progress by the student toward the degree.
- 4.3 Terms of Appointment to a Graduate Assistantship
 - 4.3.1 A contract period defines the length of time of a given assistantship. It must include at least one full semester or session but cannot exceed 12 months in duration.
 - 4.3.1.1 An assistantship contract may be renewed pending satisfactory performance, adequate degree progress, and the availability of funding.
 - 4.3.2 A graduate assistant must be admitted to a graduate degree program prior to the start of the contract period and must remain in an admitted status to a graduate degree program during the contract period.
 - 4.3.2.1 A graduate assistant is required to register for enough credit during the contract period to ensure satisfactory degree progress and meet applicable state and federal regulations as interpreted by the university.
 - 4.3.2.2 The following registration requirements apply to any fall or spring semester that is included completely or partially in the contract period of the graduate assistantship.
 - 4.3.2.2.1 A graduate assistant who is also an international graduate student must register as a full-time graduate student (at least nine (9) credits), regardless of the funding source(s) supporting the graduate assistantship, unless authorized to be less than full time by the appropriate governing body.
 - 4.3.2.2.2 A graduate assistant who is not an international graduate student must register for at least six (6)

credits, except that a graduate assistant who will complete all degree requirements by the end of the semester need only register for the credits required to graduate (at least 1 credit).

- 4.3.2.3 A graduate assistant may work over the summer without enrolling in courses unless compelled otherwise by the degree program or other governing body (i.e., for international graduate students) provided he or she is registered for fall classes.
- 4.3.2.4 The registration requirements can be met by any combination of undergraduate and/or graduate courses that are offered by the University subject to the following provisions:
 - 4.3.2.4.1 The courses are approved for the graduate assistant by the supervisor and advisor.
 - 4.3.2.4.2 The courses are not subject to restrictions imposed by the University or state or federal regulations that preclude enrollment by the graduate assistant.
- 4.3.2.5 The registration requirements for an assistantship are monitored for policy compliance by the program director. Exceptions must be approved by the Graduate Council.
- 4.3.3 The source or sources used to fund a graduate assistantship must be provided by the graduate program, the home college, or the university and be judged by the source to be appropriate for assistantship support.
- 4.3.4 A student hired as a graduate teaching assistant will be paid equal to Instructor Track faculty on a per credit basis.
- 4.3.5 Wages for a graduate assistant performing research or service duties will be a standard rate determined by Academic Affairs in consultation with Human Resources.
- 4.3.6 A graduate assistant may seek additional University employment as follows:
 - 4.3.6.1 A non-teaching graduate assistant can have another non-teaching job at the University, so long as their total hours working on campus stay below the limits in Policy 310.
 - 4.3.6.2 A teaching graduate assistant can have other teaching

assignments, so long as their total credit hours working at the University per semester stay below the limits in Policy 638.

4.3.7 A graduate assistant paid hourly for research or service could have another University job, if approved by the Program Advisor, as outlined in Policy 310.

4.3.8 The number of standard hours assigned by the supervisor as the work obligation of the graduate assistant cannot exceed a maximum set by the University as outlined in Policy 310.

4.4 Termination of a Graduate Assistantship

4.4.1 A graduate assistantship is automatically terminated by the University in any of the following circumstances: the graduate assistant completes the degree, the graduate assistant voluntarily withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from the degree program, or the graduate assistant resigns the graduate assistantship.

4.4.2 A graduate assistantship can be terminated for cause by the University at any time, as outlined in Policy 373. Reasons for termination for cause may include unsatisfactory performance of the work obligation, unsatisfactory academic performance, unsatisfactory degree progress, violation of the student code of conduct, or any other cause of similar magnitude as determined by the Supervisor and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

4.4.2.1 Wages are paid through the termination date. Payments and waivers of tuition and fees made through the termination date remain credited to the student account.

4.4.2.2 Should a graduate teaching assistant drop the program mid-semester, it will be up to the individual program to determine whether or not the student may complete the teaching assignment through the end of the semester if desires.

4.5 Administrative Authority

4.5.1 Each graduate program has the authority to establish and modify the basic terms for graduate assistantships, including the authority to create different categories of graduate assistantships that provide greater diversity in the definition of basic terms.

4.5.1.1 All such actions by the home graduate program are subject to review and approval by the Graduate Council.

- 4.5.2 Each graduate program has the authority to develop and maintain general management procedures for graduate assistantships such as but not limited to general appointment procedures, payment of wages, performance evaluation, termination, and appeal of terminations for cause.
- 4.5.3 The Graduate Council is responsible for maintaining consistency for general management procedures for graduate assistantships across all departments and programs.

V. References

- 5.1 University Policy 310: Part-Time Employment
- 5.2 University Policy 373 Termination and Reduction of Workforce
- 5.3 University Policy 638: Adjunct and Clinical Faculty
- 5.4 University Policy 706: Master's Degree Requirements
- 5.5 University Policy 343: Benefits, Payroll Deductions, and Workers Compensation
- 5.6 University Policy 373: Termination and Reduction of Workforce

VI. Procedures-N/A

VII. Addenda-N/A

Policy Owner: Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost
Policy Steward: Associate Provost for Academic and Budget Planning

History:

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