MANUAL FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

2014-2015

School of Graduate Studies and Research
Butterfield Hall
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Edinboro, PA 16444
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Fall and Spring Assistantships

Requirements

Full-Time Enrollment
Students who receive a graduate assistantship must be enrolled in a minimum of nine (9) credit hours of graduate coursework applicable to their degree program. Students may enroll in additional courses, including those applicable to certification; but may not exceed 15 credits.

PLEASE NOTE: Full-time graduate assistantships cover a maximum of nine (9) credits of tuition per semester; fees NOT included. If a GA enrolls in more than nine (9) credits (15 credits a semester is the maximum a graduate student can schedule) they must cover additional tuition costs at their own expense.

Half-time graduate assistants will receive a 4.5 credit waiver per semester.

In order to receive and maintain an assistantship, students must:

- be available to work the assistantship during regular business hours. Please note: Regular business hours for an office could be 8:00 am to 4:30 Monday through Friday while regular hours in a clinic could be 8:00 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Friday, including weekends. Be certain to check with your supervisor on typical site business hours.
- graduate assistants should contact their site supervisor as soon as possible to arrange a mutually agreeable work schedule.
- maintain a course load of nine credit hours toward the student’s program of study (fifteen credits is the maximum course load a GA can schedule per semester.)
- not be a full-time employee elsewhere, at Edinboro University or any other off-campus location. (This includes internships and student teaching.)
- Assistantships are awarded on a year-by-year basis. Renewal is dependent upon satisfactory evaluations.
- Assistantships for academic programs that are 60 hrs. (such as MFA, Counseling, Educational/School Psychology and Social Work) may be extended to three years, depending upon program head approval and satisfactory evaluations.

Loss of Assistantship
- Failure to enroll in the required minimum of graduate credits is grounds for loss of the graduate assistantship.
- A GPA of less than 3.0 is grounds for loss of an assistantship.
- Withdrawal from coursework that reduces the total number of hours of graduate coursework applicable to the student’s degree program during the semester is grounds for loss of the graduate assistantship.
Exceptions

Exceptions to the requirements may be made by the Graduate Dean for extenuating circumstances after consultation with the Program Head of the student’s degree program. It is imperative that students who have graduate assistantships who must enroll in fewer than the required minimum number of courses or who need to withdraw from a course during the semester first discuss this situation with their advisor and with the Program Head.

Graduate Assistant Administrative Details

There are certain administrative details that you need to make sure are completed. Please see that the following are addressed. If there are any problems in the future, i.e., not being paid at the appropriate rate or for the proper number of hours, please contact the Dr. Erinn Lake, Associate Dean, immediately. This is your responsibility.

Forms

A packet of forms will need to be completed in the Payroll Office in Reeder Hall. Payroll staff will need a photo ID, preferably a student ID, and a signed social security card. They also prefer that you bring a voided deposit slip from your bank so the routing numbers can be used for direct deposit.

Payroll

Your hours are submitted every two weeks to Payroll. Be sure to utilize Etime. (18 hours per week for full-time and 9 hours a week for part time).

Paychecks

The University operates on a two-week, after-the-fact, payroll. You can expect your first paycheck approximately a month after you start working. Pay stubs can be printed through Etime.

Graduate students should NOT work any hours at their site until their payroll forms are processed.

Graduate Assistant Hours

Full-time

Full-time graduate assistants work a total of 18 hours a week for 15 weeks for a total of 270 hours each semester (this does not refer to summers or breaks). Hours that exceed 270 will be billed to the unit in which the GA is assigned.

Half-time

Half-time graduate assistants work a total of 9 hours a week for 15 weeks for a total of 135 hours (this does not refer to summers or breaks). Hours that exceed 135 will be billed to the unit in which the GA is assigned.

Students may not work during breaks without permission of the dean or associate dean in the School of Graduate Studies.
Summer Assistantships
An assistantship is awarded for the academic year (first and second semester) only, and we do not guarantee summer employment. However, some offices on campus have the need for a Graduate Assistant to work during the summer sessions. If you work in an office where there is such a need, there are special guidelines for summer graduate assistantships.

Summer Guidelines
Full-time graduate assistantship:
- 6 hours of course work during the entire summer
- Waiver of tuition charges for 6 hours
- Required maximum work assignment of 200 hours

Half-time graduate assistantship:
- 3 hours of course work during the entire summer
- Waiver of tuition charges for 3 hours
- Required maximum work assignment of 100 hours

Any credit hours taken during the summer sessions in excess of the hours specified above will be the full financial responsibility of the student.

Any exception to these guidelines requires the approval of the Graduate Dean.

Pay Scale and Remuneration

Pay Rate
Graduate Assistants are paid at the rate of $7.50 an hour. Full-time assistants are required to work 270 hours per semester and will receive a stipend of $2,025 per semester. Half-time assistants are required to work 135 hours per semester and will receive a stipend of $1,012.50 a semester. Graduate assistants are not required to work during semester breaks.

Terminating Assistantships
If you terminate your assistantship prior to the midpoint of a semester yet continue to take classes, you must repay the amount of the course tuition for the courses you were enrolled in during that semester. Repayment is determined according to the sliding scale listed on the Refund Page in the semester’s bulletin of classes. It will be your responsibility to notify the Graduate Office immediately of any plans to terminate your assistantship or any courses. If you terminate your assistantship and withdraw from your classes prior to the end of a semester, you must repay the tuition and fees for the courses you were enrolled in during that semester.

Evaluations
Each graduate assistant is evaluated twice a year by the work site supervisor. At that time, you will meet with your supervisor and discuss the evaluation in detail. This allows the opportunity for either party to discuss any deficiencies or expectations that are not being met. Unsatisfactory performance will be immediately noted and discussions will occur between work site supervisor and student to try and improve performance. There may also be the need to
relocate a graduate assistant to another work site in order to improve her/his performance. However, continued unsatisfactory performance is cause for loss of an assistantship.

**Release Time for Professional Activities**
Graduate students sometimes have the opportunity to attend professional conferences and programs. A Graduate Assistant can be excused up to 15 hours of a work assignment with regular pay per semester.

To attend a professional conference/activity, students must have the Request for Professional Release Time form signed by their program head and their site supervisor attesting to the academic nature of the program. A copy should be sent to the Graduate Office. Arrangements should be made with the work site supervisor at least two weeks in advance.

**Charges for Graduate Students Taking Undergraduate Courses**
Graduate Students at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania are permitted and, sometimes, required to take courses at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Graduate students are charged the graduate tuition rate for all coursework, including undergraduate courses.

**Procedure for Changing Assistantship**
Graduate assistants are not expected to change worksites during the course of their program. However, Graduate Assistants may request a change of assistantship for extenuating circumstances. The procedure for requesting this change is as follows:

1. A discussion with your current worksite supervisor that identifies any problems (if appropriate) and your intentions of finding another worksite.

2. Obtain the support of the head of your academic program to change to another worksite.

3. A letter must be written to the Graduate Office that outlines your justification for this change.

Every effort will be made to help make the transition as smooth as possible. However, students are discouraged from requesting this type of change unless there are extenuating circumstances or an academic basis for such a change.

**Degree Students Who Desire to Change Curriculum**
A student who has been admitted as a degree student in one curriculum but who now desires to change to another curriculum must complete the procedures which have been established for admission to the new curriculum. *The student would initiate these procedures by writing a letter to the Graduate Office requesting a change of curriculum.*

The Graduate Dean will, if the student is admitted to the new curriculum, inform her or him in writing of the credits previously earned that will be accepted as part of the minimum credit requirements for the new curriculum.

**Assistantships**
Graduate assistants who want to change their major must be aware that each program is allotted a specific number of assistantships to support graduate students enrolled in that
degree program. A graduate assistantship awarded in one program will not be transferred automatically to another program. Therefore, a student with a graduate assistantship will have to re-apply for a graduate assistantship when there is a change of curriculum.

Policies
The following section identifies some University policies that are of special importance to graduate assistants.

Affirmative Action Policy
Edinboro University is committed to affirmative action for all persons in its educational programs, activities and employment practices. Please direct equal opportunity inquiries to the Human Resources and Social Equity Office, Edinboro University.

Standards of Ethics for Graduate Students
It is expected that graduate students of the university will maintain the highest standards of ethics in connection with all phases of their graduate work. Any form of dishonesty, including lying, cheating, or plagiarizing* will not be tolerated.

*Plagiarism may be defined as the act of taking the ideas and/or expression of ideas of another person and representing them as one’s own. It is nothing less than an act of theft and, as such, is subject to University disciplinary action. The penalty for plagiarism may include a failing grade for the assignment in question and/or a failing grade for the course.

Clearly, plagiarism defeats the central purpose of education, namely, to enable one to think and formulate one’s own ideas. The student who has doubts about whether or not her/his work may constitute plagiarism should consult with the course instructor prior to submitting the work. The instructor can provide clear guidance on how the student can avoid committing this act of academic misconduct.

Appealing a Grade
When a graduate student’s grade has been adjusted because a faculty member has determined to her or his own satisfaction that the student was guilty of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing, the student may, if she or he feels unfairly penalized, appeal the grade by following the Grade Appeal Procedure.

A faculty member who adjusts a student’s grade because she or he has determined to her or his own satisfaction that the student was guilty of lying, cheating or plagiarizing is required to immediately notify the appropriate academic dean of this action.

Loss of Assistantship
A graduate student will immediately lose her/his assistantship if found guilty of any form of dishonesty as described above.
Questions/Answers Section

1. **Do I still get paid if I miss any hours due to sickness?**
   
   No. There is no sick leave. Any hours you miss you are required to make up if you seek payment for these lost hours. This can be done at the convenience of your worksite supervisor.

2. **If I attend a school function/conference, and I miss some scheduled work time, am I required to make this time up?**

   Not necessarily. Students may attend up to two conferences each academic year and are not required to make up the lost time. This must be approved in writing by the worksite supervisor prior to attendance at the activity.

3. **As a graduate assistant, am I eligible to receive an employee parking sticker?**

   No. Only those graduate assistants who work in the residence halls can receive employee stickers.

4. **Do I have to reapply for a graduate assistantship each semester?**

   Read the conditions that apply to your particular program in your assistantship award letter.

5. **Can my assistantship be terminated prior to the completion of my degree?**

   Yes. Your assistantship can be terminated for either or both of the following reasons: (1) failure to maintain academic progress, (2) failure to maintain adequate work site performance.

6. **Do I need a student identification card?**

   Yes. A graduate identification card is required of all students enrolled in a graduate course at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania to use university services. This card is required to charge out materials from the Baron-Forness Library, for admission and use of the computer labs, and can be used as admission to events on campus. It also is required in order to pick up your paycheck in the Bursar’s Office.

7. **Who can I contact for more information on GA assignments?**

   Dr. Erinn Lake, Assistant Dean, Graduate School and School of Education, at (814) 732-1363 or via email at lakee@edinboro.edu.
Appendix A:
Worksite Evaluation Form
**Edinboro University Graduate Assistant Worksite Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Program of Study</th>
<th>Worksite Placement Supervisor</th>
<th>Worksite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instructions:** The site supervisor should evaluate the student objectively, comparing her/him with other students of comparable academic level, with other personnel assigned the same or similarly classified jobs, or with individual standards. Please refer to the attached rating definition sheet in order to circle the number that best represents the student’s level of performance in each category. *Remarks are particularly helpful.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Poor 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Excellent 4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Applicable [ ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ATTITUDE: Application to work. Remarks:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. WILLINGNESS/ABILITY TO LEARN Remarks:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. DEPENDABILITY Remarks:</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. INITIATIVE Remarks:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ABILITY TO ORGANIZE WORK AND SELF Remarks:</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. RESPONSE TO SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. QUALITY OF WORK Remarks:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. RELATIONS WITH PEERS Remarks:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. LEADERSHIP QUALITIES Remarks:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTENDANCE: Acceptable [ ] Unacceptable [ ]

PUNCTUALITY: Acceptable [ ] Unacceptable [ ]

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Overall Performance: Excellent Very Good Average Fair Unsatisfactory

 Supervisor’s Signature _______________________________ Date ________________

I acknowledge that I have read this report and that I have been given an opportunity to discuss it with my supervisor. My signature does not necessarily mean that I agree with the report.

Student’s Signature _______________________________ Date ________________

Please return completed form to: The School of Graduate Studies and Research
Butterfield Hall
Edinboro University of PA
Edinboro, PA 16444.
Graduate Assistant Evaluations

The following definitions are designed to help you evaluate the graduate students fairly and consistently. Please make sure you review these prior to completing the evaluation. It is also important that the graduate assistant be familiar with the scale as described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Explanation of Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poor/Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>A rating of 1 means that the assistant’s performance with respect to the factor under consideration is <strong>below</strong> acceptable standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>A rating of 2 means that the assistant’s performance with respect to the factor under consideration <strong>no more than meets or occasionally falls below</strong> acceptable standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>A rating of 3 means that the assistant’s performance with respect to the factor under consideration <strong>meets and occasionally exceeds</strong> acceptable standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>A rating of 4 means that the assistant’s performance with respect to the factor under consideration <strong>frequently exceeds</strong> acceptable standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>A rating of 5 means that the assistant’s performance with respect to the factor under consideration <strong>consistently exceeds</strong> acceptable standards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Evaluation Meeting

This is the most important step in the evaluation process. The discussion should be under circumstances affording a relaxed and private interview.

Upon completion of the evaluation meeting, return the original form to the School of Graduate Studies and Research, Butterfield Hall, Edinboro University of PA, Edinboro, PA 16444.
Appendix B:
Example of
GA “Intentions” Form
Dear Graduate Assistant,

We are in the process of determining availability for Spring 2013 assistantships. All assistantship renewals are based on the recommendation of the program head of your particular major. **Please check the appropriate space below indicating your future plans, even if you are NOT returning to your GA position in the fall.** It is important that we account for all potential vacancies. Also, please complete the short worksite survey that appears on the bottom of this form. In order to be considered for continuation, you must return this form to the School of Graduate Studies and Research no later than **Monday, November 1, 2012.**

Name: ____________________________________________  Banner ID # ______________________

Phone ____________________________   Current E-mail ______________________________

Master’s Program of Study ___________________________  Anticipated Graduation Date ____________

Worksite _________________________

_____  I am not interested in an assistantship for Spring 2013.

_____  I will graduate in December 2012.

_____  I will return for full-time graduate coursework in Spring 2013 and wish to remain in my assistantship, if recommended by my program head.

_____  I will return to EUP for Spring 2013 but will have a full-time internship/student teaching assignment and am, therefore, not eligible for an assistantship.

_______________________________________________________________________________

Please circle below the response that best describes your perception or evaluation of your current worksite

(SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree).

1. The following statement describes my duties at this worksite: My duties are approximately __% skills that I will be able to use in my profession.  
   80-100% 60-79% 40-59% 20-39% 0-19%

2. Describe your duties on a typical day:

   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

3. About what percent of your time would you say is devoted to clerical activities?  
   80-100% 60-79% 40-59% 20-39% 0-19%

4. My worksite supervisor has been a professional role model for me.  
   SD  D  U  A  SA

5. This worksite has benefited my professional goals.  
   SD  D  U  A  SA

6. I have learned new skills at this worksite.  
   SD  D  U  A  SA

_______________________________________________________________________________
7. My worksite supervisor has monitored my work.
   SD    D    U    A    SA

8. My worksite supervisor has asked me to work more than the allotted 18 hours (9 hours for ½ time assistants) per week.
   SD    D    U    A    SA

9. Would you recommend your work site to another student? If yes, why? If no, why not?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

Return form to: School of Graduate Studies and Research
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Butterfield Hall
Edinboro, PA 16444
Appendix C:  
Example of  
Request for  
Professional Release  
Time
Request for Professional Release Time
for Graduate Students

Last Name                                            First                                            Middle

Banner Student ID @____________________________________

Address                                            City                                            State                                            Zip

Program of Study

Reason for Release Time:______________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Date of Professional Activity:________________________________________________________

Anticipated Number of Work Hours Missed:_______________________________________________

(    ) I do support this request                  (    ) I do not support this request

Site Supervisor                                            Date

(    ) I do support this request                  (    ) I do not support this request

Program Head                                            Date

(    ) I do support this request                  (    ) I do not support this request

Dean, Graduate Studies                                            Date

nr 2/6/13