

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP

Informational Document

TO: Deans, Program Directors, Chairpersons, Faculty, and Administrative Staff

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CC: Matthew Bodah, Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Budget
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DATE: February 3, 2021

RE: 2021-2022 Graduate Assistantships: Teaching, Research and Administrative

This memorandum provides critical information and links with respect to the hiring of Graduate Assistants at the University of Rhode Island.

PREFACE

The following procedures are to be used in the appointment of Graduate Assistants during the 2021-2022 academic year. It is informed by the current GAU contract and Graduate School Policies and Procedures.

To fill a graduate assistantship position, a graduate student must be fully matriculated and in good academic standing. They must register for at least six (6) credits each semester and will be billed as full-time students. Doctoral students who have completed all their requirements except their dissertation defense that are **designated by the Graduate School as ABD (All But Dissertation) for tuition and assistantship eligibility**, are required to register for a minimum of three (3) credits. To be granted ABD Status, a student needs to submit the [ABD Request Form](#). Students must possess a valid social security card and submit a completed I-9 in accordance with established procedures within three days of starting the appointment.

Official letters of appointment are required for all Graduate Assistantships. Appointment letters are available on the [URI Graduate School Assistantship website](#). The **signed appointment letter with specific duties and responsibilities listed** must be submitted to the Graduate School once the job is entered in e-Campus. Appointment letters with scanned signatures will be accepted to expedite the process. The letters serve as a contractual agreement between the University and the graduate student. These letters cover expectations and duties as well as specific information regarding the stipend rate, graduate level, work period, and work dates along with applicable policies and procedures. Please note that assistantships are university jobs with benefits and thus require a position number granted by the Budget Office. **Paying a student hourly and providing tuition support DOES NOT make an assistantship. Hourly students are not eligible for benefits.**

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I. Assistantship Job Codes

New assistantship job codes have been established by the University to differentiate funding sources that support assistantships. Please use the job codes below, effective July 1, 2020.

Job Codes	Description
GT5252	Graduate Teaching Assistantships allocated from the Provost (Fund 100) with tuition & fee waiver from central Fund 100 CFS
GT5221*	Graduate Teaching Assistantships that are supported by colleges/other areas
GR5253*	Graduate Research Assistantships that are funded from Federal and/or State Grants (Fund 500) - may be eligible for tuition differential
GR5223*	Graduate Research Assistantships that are supported by colleges/other areas (Non-Fund 500) - may be eligible for tuition differential
GR5211	Land Grant funded Graduate Research Assistantships where URI supports the tuition & fee waiver as a match to the Land Grant funds
GA5222	Graduate Administrative Assistantships allocated from the Provost (Fund 100) with tuition & fee waiver from central Fund 100 CFS
GA5212*	Graduate Administrative Assistantships that are supported by colleges/other areas

**Please note that all job codes, with the exception of job codes GT5252, GR5211, and GA5222, must have a SGA-2G form submitted with the original appointment letter.*

II. The April 15 Resolution

The University of Rhode Island participates in the Council of Graduate Schools' (CGS) "[Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees and Assistantships](#)" also known as the "April 15 Resolution." The deadline for acceptance of financial aid remains on that date, at midnight Sunday night in our time zone.

Participation in the resolution obliges us to **allow admitted graduate students to consider all offers of financial support through April 15**. In turn, the resolution binds students to their decisions made or held in place after April 15. Over 325 U.S. institutions offering graduate degrees have agreed to abide by this resolution. Your cooperation ensures that both students and programs conduct their admissions in an ethical manner, and that they receive equal treatment and consideration in the financial support decision-making process.

Here are some important aspects of the Resolution:

- The April 15, 2021, deadline applies only to acceptance of an offer of financial support such as a graduate scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship.
- It applies only to offers of financial support for the following academic year.
- Although you can send out your offers well before the deadline, prospective graduate students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial aid prior to April 15.
- Acceptance of an offer of financial support made after April 15, 2021, is conditional upon presentation by the student of a written release from any previously accepted offer.

- All offers of financial support should include a copy of or link to the “April 15 Resolution”:
<http://cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution>

III. University of Rhode Island Graduate Assistantships

A. Graduate Teaching Assistants are fully matriculated graduate students assigned to positions allocated by the Provost or other colleges/departments (see job code chart above, section I) to assist primarily in the teaching activities of the department. Students may be appointed to full-time (20 hrs/week) or half-time (10 hrs/week) assistantships. Graduate Assistantships funded by the Provost include a tuition remission (up to 12 credit hours per semester that will be prorated to the percentage of the appointment) and health and dental benefits.

- Students appointed to full-time Teaching assistantships receive tuition remission and a 20% waiver of the standard fees, which includes: registration, health services, and the student services fee. They are also eligible for health and dental insurance covered by the University.
- Students appointed to half-time Teaching assistantships (10/hrs week) receive half tuition remission. Half-time assistantship students are responsible for 100% of the standard fees. They are also eligible for health and dental insurance covered by the University.

Teaching Assistantships funded by colleges/departments must provide an SGA-2G form (See section VIII) for tuition and fee payments. Colleges/Departments may choose to pay student fees with their own funds. For current Stipend rates for Graduate Teaching Assistants visit the [Graduate School Assistantship website](#). [Click here](#) for tuition rates.

B. Graduate Research Assistants are fully matriculated graduate students who are assigned to individual research projects sponsored by outside sources or by the University. Students may be appointed to full-time (20 hrs/week) or half-time (10 hrs/week) assistantships. The Graduate Research Assistantship includes a tuition remission (up to 12 credit hours per semester that will be prorated to the percentage of the appointment) and health and dental benefits.

- Students appointed to full-time Research assistantships receive tuition remission and a 20% waiver of the standard fees, which includes: registration, health services, and the student services fee. They are also eligible for health and dental insurance covered by the University.
- Students appointed to half-time Research assistantships (10/hrs week) receive half the tuition remission. Half-time assistantship students are responsible for 100% of the standard fees. They are also eligible for health and dental insurance covered by the University.

Grants supporting Graduate Research Assistants are charged tuition, stipend, and health benefits through the SGA-2 form (See section VIII). Principal Investigators may choose to pay student fees through their grants. For current Stipend rates for Graduate Research Assistants visit the [Graduate School Assistantship website](#). [Click here](#) for tuition rates.

C. Graduate Administrative Assistants are fully matriculated graduate students who are assigned to positions in the department/office to assist with administrative activities. Students may be appointed to full-time (20 hrs/week) or half-time (10 hrs/week) assistantships. Graduate Administrative Assistantships funded by the Provost includes a tuition remission (up to 12 credit hours per semester that will be prorated to the percentage of the appointment) and health and dental benefits.

- Students appointed to full-time Administrative assistantships receive tuition remission and a 20% waiver of the standard fees, which includes: registration, health services, and the student services fee. They are also eligible for health and dental insurance covered by the University.
- Students appointed to half-time Administrative assistantships (10/hrs week) receive half tuition remission. Half-time assistantship students are responsible for 100% of the standard fees. They are also eligible for health and dental insurance covered by the University.

Administrative Assistantships funded by colleges/departments must provide an SGA-2G form for tuition and fee payments. Colleges/Departments may choose to pay student fees with their own funds. For current Stipend rates for Graduate Administrative Assistants visit the [Graduate School Assistantship website](#). [Click here](#) for tuition rates.

IV. Levels of Appointment

- Level I:** All Graduate Assistants in master's programs and those in Ph.D. programs who have fewer than 30 graduate credits.
- Level II:** All those who have completed at least 30 graduate credit hours (exclusive of entrance deficiencies, language research tools and research) certified by the Dean of the Graduate School as creditable towards their program of studies before the date of appointment **or** have a master's degree.
- Level III:** All Graduate Assistants who are enrolled in a Ph.D. program and have passed both the oral and written portions of the Ph.D. comprehensive examinations prior to the date of appointment.

V. Stipends and Tuition

- Stipends:** For current academic year stipend rates refer to the [Graduate School Assistantship website](#). Please note that the stipends listed for AY 2021-2022 are based on the current GAU contract. Students appointed to half-time assistantships (10/hrs week) receive half the stipend.
- Tuition and Standard Fees:** The tuition and standard fees for academic year and semester appointments are available on the [URI Enrollment Services website](#). Please note that students with full-time (20/hrs week) assistantships are responsible for 80% of their standard fees, which includes: registration, health services, and the student services fees. Students appointed to half-time assistantships (10/hrs week) receive half the tuition and are responsible for 100% of the standard fees.
- New England Regional Status:** Students who are eligible for New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) regional status must apply for and be certified as a regional student prior to the beginning of the semester for this tuition rate to be applicable. Additional information is available at the NEBHE website <http://www.nebhe.org/>.
- Graduate Research Tuition Differential Fellowship** - This program will provide a scholarship for the difference between out-of-state (OS) tuition and in-state (IS) tuition for graduate students supported by externally funded graduate research assistantships. Please include the tuition differential chartfield string on the SGA-2 form.

VI. Period of Appointments

- A. **Academic Year:** The academic year begins five days before Advising Day in the Fall and runs through Commencement. For specific dates for the current academic year refer to the “Academic Calendar” on the [URI website](#).
- B. **URI Payroll/Employment Dates:** For payroll dates refer to the “In-House Payroll Appointment Dates Chart” provided by Human Resources or on the [Payroll Department website](#).
- C. **Summer Employment:** Students may be paid through grants or other sources during the summer period for services they provide. The work period for summer employment may not overlap the work period for academic year employment (i.e. it may not begin before commencement nor extend beyond five business days before the fall semester).

Further information regarding Summer Graduate Research Assistant employment during the summer of 2021 is forthcoming. A standard summer employment appointment letter template will be distributed.

VII. Graduate Assistantship Employment Procedures

** The forms listed below are to be submitted to Human Resources, NOT the Graduate School.*

- A. **Employment Documentation:** In order to comply with Federal I-9 employment regulations, new Graduate Assistants must provide their departments with original identity and employment eligibility documents by August 29, 2021 for the first semester and January 2, 2022 for the second semester. Failure to supply the necessary employment documentation may result in termination of employment by Human Resources as outlined on the [URI Human Resources eCampus website](#). Returning Graduate Assistants are responsible for verifying that the documentation on file with the department is correct and up to date. All Non-U.S. citizens must go to the Payroll Office prior to starting work.
- B. **Drug Free Workplace Policy:** In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order No. 89-14, Graduate Assistants are required to complete a Drug-Free Form and return it to their department/office. Forms are available on the [URI Human Resources eCampus Forms website](#).
- C. **W-4:** Graduate Assistants are responsible for completing a W-4 Form online through the URI e-Campus system. All non-U.S. citizens are responsible for completing a different tax document. For information please refer to the [URI Foreign National Tax Compliance website](#).
- D. **Bar of Claims:** Graduate Assistants are responsible for completing a **mandatory** Bar of Claims Form available on the [URI Human Resources eCampus Forms website](#) . This includes anyone on the graduate assistant payroll that has been here previously but is being rehired for next semester.

VIII. International Graduate Assistant Procedures

- A. **English Proficiency:** In order to comply with the Council for Postsecondary Education's "Oral Proficiency Policies for Instructional Personnel" adopted 4/16/93, the oral proficiency of international students being appointed to Graduate Teaching Assistantships must be evaluated and certified. Procedures for meeting this requirement are detailed in the "University of Rhode Island English Proficiency Policy." For detailed information, go to the [Office of International Students & Scholars website](#) ; e-mail issoff@etal.uri.edu; or call (401) 874-2395.
- B. **Payroll:** Students must have a Social Security number before their appointment can be entered into e-Campus and finalized through Human Resources. For international students who do not already have a Social Security number, this could mean a delay of up to two months before they are eligible to receive their first paycheck. Please communicate this to your international Graduate Assistants. In addition, their tuition waivers will be posted to their account without delay, but they should make arrangements to pay their fees on time so that late charges will not be assessed. All non-U.S. citizens must come to the Payroll Office prior to starting work.

IX. Student Tuition and Fee Payment Form (SGA-2G)

- A. **Teaching Assistantships:** All Teaching Assistantships, not centrally funded by the Provost Office, must submit a SGA-2G form to pay for tuition and fees. (See section C below for additional information)
- B. **Research & Administrative Assistantships:** Tuition and standard fee payments may be included on the SGA-2G form. Students appointed to full-time (20hrs/wk) assistantships receive tuition remission and 20% of the standard fees, which includes: registration, health services, and the student services fee. The tuition and fees are paid directly to Enrollment Services via an SGA-2G form. Students appointed to half-time (10hrs/wk) assistantships receive half of the tuition remission. Students on half-time assistantships pay 100% of their standard fees. Principal Investigators, Colleges or Departments may choose to pay student fees with their own funds or grants.
- C. **SGA-2G/1G Procedure:** Once the assistantship job is entered, a complete packet including a signed appointment letter with specific duties and responsibilities listed (*reference [section 3.3](#) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement*) and a SGA-2G form (*when applicable, see section II*) must be submitted to the Graduate School's [online portal](#) after July 1, 2021 to complete the process. All SGA-2G/1G forms are also submitted directly to the Graduate School's [online portal](#). The Graduate School will forward the SGA-2G/1G form to the appropriate approving office for signature depending on the funding source. The SGA-2G form is available on the [URI Human Resources eCampus website](#).

X. Submitting Appointment Letter Procedures

The department is responsible for entering the assistantship job into eCampus after July 1, 2021. The job is to be entered in e-Campus no later than August 15, 2021 for academic year and Fall assistantships or

December 15, 2021 for Spring assistantships. You may reference the [Graduate Assistantship Appointment Letter Instructions](#) guide for additional information.

Once the job is entered in eCampus, a complete packet including a signed appointment letter with specific duties and responsibilities listed (*reference [section 3.3](#) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement*) and a SGA-2G form (*when applicable, see VIII*) must be submitted through the Graduate School's [online portal](#).

Teaching assistants should be assigned a specific teaching duty. The teaching assistant should be listed as either the instructor of record or as a co-instructor in eCampus for the course(s) to which they are assigned.

XI. Additional Employment on the Student Payroll

Academic Year: Domestic graduate students who are Graduate Assistants or are hired on Graduate Student Hourly Payroll are eligible to work additional hours on the Graduate Student Hourly Payroll with the approval of their major professor. Domestic Graduate Assistants may be allowed to work an additional five hours a week on the Graduate Student Hourly Payroll and do not need approval from the Graduate School.

Level III domestic graduate students who are Graduate Assistants or are hired on Graduate Student Hourly Payroll must be approved by the Graduate School to work an additional ten hours a week on the graduate student hourly payroll.

Per Homeland Security regulations, international students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week during the academic year. The Graduate School will monitor these additional hours to ensure compliance with eligibility requirements.

XII. Leave & Terminations

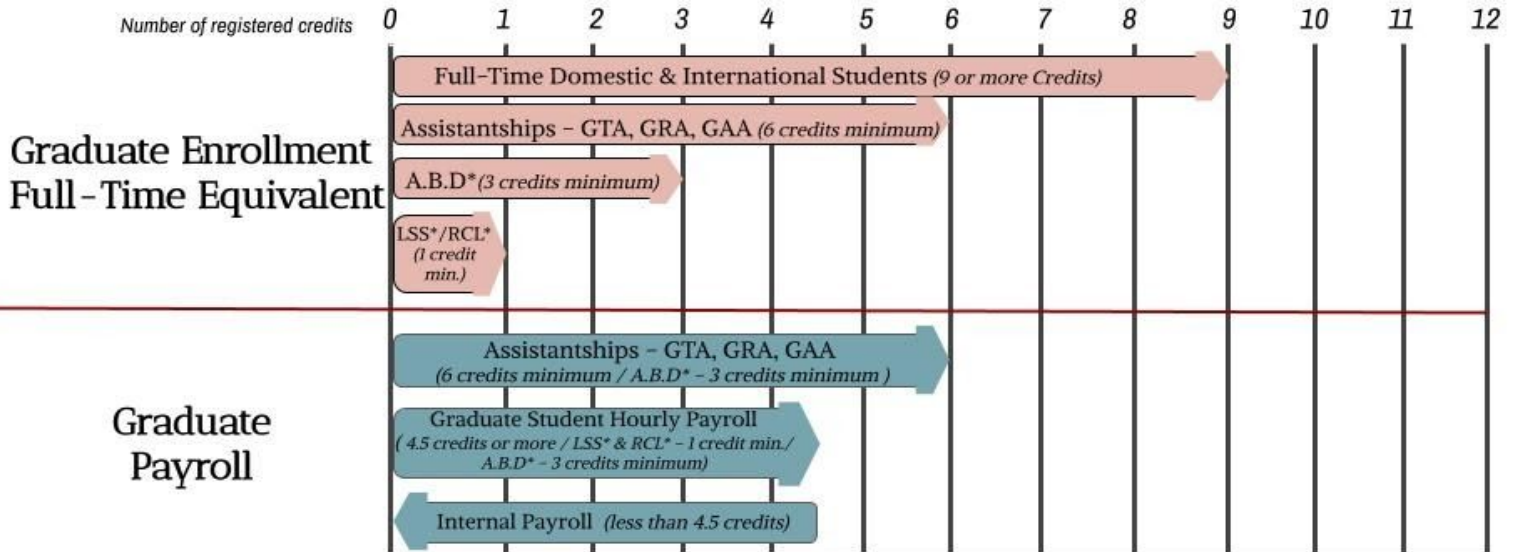
Early termination of appointments (termination during the period of appointment indicated) should occur only under extenuating circumstances. Early terminations of Graduate Assistantships can occur for two reasons, i.e. personal (request of student) or professional (request of department/office).

If the department/office requests the termination of the Assistantship, the department/office must show that the appointee has received periodic advice related to those areas of inadequate performance that have led to the request for early termination.

For early termination, the department/office or Principal Investigator must inform the student in writing that the stipend and tuition will be prorated for the period of the appointment and that the student is responsible for the remainder of the tuition and standard fees. The Graduate School must be notified in writing in the event of an early termination. The Graduate School is responsible for forwarding the termination request to Enrollment Services and the hiring department is responsible for completing a [URI Payroll In-House Request for Contract Change](#) form to notify the Payroll and Human Services offices.

XIII. Graduate Student Enrollment & Payroll Eligibility Chart

Graduate Student Enrollment & Payroll Eligibility Chart



* **A.B.D** - 'All But Dissertation' For Domestic and International Doctoral students who have completed all comprehensive exams, required courses, submitted their research proposal, and other program specific requirements. Charged per credit hour.

* **LSS** - 'Last Semester Status' Only for Domestic students. Can be reported as full-time degree students on their last semester of their degree program.

* **RCL** - 'Reduced Credit Load', Only for International Students. Can be reported as full-time degree students for any one semester only throughout their graduate school period.

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GRADUATE ASSISTANT PAYROLL

Assistantships - GTA, GRA, GAA

1. Full time (20 hours) or Part Time (10 Hours)
2. Per Semester or full academic year contracts

Graduate Student Hourly Payroll Includes:

1. Assistantships with additional hours (5 or 10 hours)
2. Non-assistantships - students hired on an hourly basis.
3. Last Semester Status, Reduced Course Load, and A.B.D students since they are considered full time

Internal Payroll - Temporary positions (Full time first 30 days then drops to 15 hrs after 30 days) Includes:

1. Part-Time Faculty
2. Non - Students
3. Domestic Students with less than 4.5 credits

ASSISTANTSHIP CATEGORIES

Teaching & Administrative Assistantships (6 credits minimum-12 Credits Maximum) *In-state and Out of State tuition rate is considered*

- 10 hr T.A / AA
 - ◆ ½ Tuition Covered by URI
 - ◆ ½ Tuition Covered by Student
- 20 hr TA / AA
 - ◆ Full tuition covered by URI

A.B.D - (3 credits minimum) *Domestic and International students.*

- Limited time period - Two semesters
- Pay per credit

Research Assistantships (6 credits minimum-12 Credits Maximum) *All receive In-state tuition rate*

- 10 hr R.A
 - ◆ ½ Tuition Covered by Grant
 - ◆ ½ Tuition Covered by Student or Grant
- 20 hr RA
 - ◆ Full tuition covered by Grant