

Policy Guidelines

Academic, Administrative and Financial Administration of Graduate Assistantships

Policy Guidelines Related to Assistantships:

1. The awarding of a graduate assistantship is an academic process initiated by a student's academic department or college. Only a student's home academic department or college may approve a graduate assistantship waiver, regardless of where the student is working; however, the waiver may reside in the academic or research unit where the student is working.
2. Students receiving graduate assistantships are expected to assist faculty either with sponsored research or instruction. Students with assistantships must either be Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs).
3. Faculty members in students' home academic departments are responsible for ensuring that the work performed by students receiving graduate assistantships is directly related to the students' academic programs of study. This responsibility may be shared with faculty in another academic or research unit when a student works in a different unit other than his/her home department or school.
4. No assistantships shall be approved for students working in administrative units, except for those assistantships funded through sponsored programs that allow GSTRP (Graduate Student Tuition Remission Program) tuition recovery. Administrative units may hire graduate students as "Graduate Assistants" (GAs), who will **not** be eligible for tuition waivers. The hiring departments should pay those students a wage commensurate with the duties being performed. Administrative units include all departments that are **not** academic departments or research centers.
5. The awarding of a graduate assistantship results in waiving a student's tuition, with the exception of the \$25 fee and any tuition differential for a particular discipline above the base graduate tuition, which are both the responsibility of the student. Fiscal responsibility for waivers is shared between the Institute and the academic departments or research centers. Any revenue lost from waivers in excess of centrally planned and approved GRA/GTA levels shall be considered in the Institute's budget planning each year on a unit-by-unit (academic or research) basis.

Categories of Assistantships:

As stated, only two types of assistantships are permitted: Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA) and Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA). The prior classification of Graduate Student Assistantship (GSA) will no longer be used, effective Fall 2006.

Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs) are generally intended to be funded through sponsored research. GRA students participate in research and typically

perform the following activities: help conduct experiments, analyze data, research academic literature, write computer programs, and author papers and theses. Most GRA salaries should be charged to sponsored programs participating in the Graduate Student Tuition Remission Program (GSTRP). However, upon specific approval by the Provost, academic and research units also may hire GRAs in support of non-sponsored, faculty research. This is especially the case for new faculty, pursuant to offer letters. Generally these students are paid through General Operations funds.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) are primarily funded by departmental General Operations budgets. GTAs provide normal instructional support services such as teaching, managing labs, holding tutorial sessions, and grading papers. Students working on sponsored teaching grants should be charged to the sponsor, if the sponsored award is eligible for participation in GSTRP. Colleges will be responsible for covering resident tuition waived for GTAs in excess of approved levels.

Graduate Assistantship Planning, Budgeting, and Accounting:

As indicated in principle number four, fiscal responsibility for revenue lost due to assistantships is shared between the Institute and the academic departments approving the waivers. Beginning in Fiscal 2007 the process will operate as follows:

1. Resident tuition for all **sponsored** GRAs and GTAs will be billed to sponsors via GSTRP, unless specifically prohibited by the sponsor. Sponsored awards from the Georgia Tech Foundation and the Georgia Tech Research Corporation shall be subject to GSTRP billing beginning with the Fall Semester of 2006. The Provost may grant exemptions to this requirement.
2. The number of non-sponsored Graduate Research Assistantships and Graduate Teaching Assistantships will be determined as part of the Institute's budget development and allocation process. For Fiscal 2007, the approved number of assistantships allowed by academic and research units will be initially based on the actual number of GTAs and GRAs awarded in Fiscal 2005.
3. The initial year's base of non-sponsored GRAs and GTAs may be adjusted by the Provost after review of factors such as: historical levels of assistantships awarded, expected level of sponsored funding, enrollment targets, work required on sponsored awards (for GRAs), and teaching loads (GTAs).
4. Academic or research units exceeding their approved levels of GRAs or GTAs will be responsible for covering the resident (GSTRP) portion of the tuition revenue forfeited. Likewise, colleges that go below the assistantship target are eligible to receive additional funding equivalent to the GSTRP savings, subject to approval by the Provost and the availability of funds.

5. For Fiscal 2007 the process to implement Paragraph four will involve a reconciliation performed once each semester by the Office of Budget Planning and Administration, which will compare planned to actual assistantships. For Fiscal 2008 and future years the intent is to use the GSTRP system to bill out all waivers, sponsored and non-sponsored.

Additional Procedures to Be Implemented:

The following two additional procedures will be established for assistantships:

1. Guidelines will be issued regarding the minimum pay levels for graduate assistants. The guidelines will take into consideration whether students are working half or one-third time and whether they are masters or doctoral students.
2. A cutoff date will be established for validating and finalizing the type of assistantship for each student. After this date no changes will be allowed for a student until the following semester.

Exceptions:

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by a designated representative of the Provost's Office.