

# UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

## TRANSMITTAL OF FACULTY SENATE LEGISLATION

(Faculty Senate legislation is to be submitted to the chancellor to approve or disapprove within *ten calendar days* of the Faculty Senate action. The chancellor may approve or veto any Faculty Senate legislation within a period from the *eleventh through the twenty-fifth calendar day* after such action has been presented, unless the Assembly has been petitioned to amend or rescind the Faculty Senate legislation. In the latter case, the chancellor's approval or veto shall be made no later than fifteen calendar days after the Assembly has voted on and failed to approve a motion to amend or rescind a legislative action of the Faculty Senate. The chancellor shall provide written reasons for a veto to the Faculty Senate.)

### To the Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock:

The following resolution/legislation passed the UALR Faculty Senate on April 15, 2016.

**Motion FS\_2016\_15.** Graduate Council (Legislation. Requires majority vote at one Faculty Senate meeting, no second required) Graduate Student Regulations

**Be it Resolved** that the GA Policy be adopted.

### GA Policy

Policy:

The primary purpose of graduate assistantships are, (1) to recruit and retain quality graduate students to UALR degree programs who will provide services in support of the teaching, research, and service missions and administrative functions of UALR, and (2) to partially support graduate students while pursuing their graduate degrees. This policy speaks to the definition of a graduate assistantship, the types, duties and responsibilities of graduate assistants, eligibility, and other related issues.

### Definition

A graduate assistantship is a cash stipend made to a graduate student for services provided by a graduate student in support of the mission and functions of the university. Graduate assistantships will be accompanied by a tuition remission (see Compensation and Benefits section).

### Duties and Types of Graduate Assistantships

Assistantship duties may vary considerably both within and between programs. While it is recognized that clear and distinct boundaries between different types of assistantships sometimes may not be clearly defined, graduate assistantships will come in four basic types (listed below). The type of assistantship given to a student should be that which, in the judgment of the unit in which the student serves, most closely reflects the primary activity of the student, based on the following descriptions:

*Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA)* . Students work primarily on a research project that may potentially lead to a thesis or dissertation or other scholarly output. Typically, these assistantships are externally funded and, in the best case scenario, the work assignment is aligned with or related to the student's own research project, although this may not always be the case.

*Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA)* . Students work in support of the teaching mission of the university. Their work may involve, but not be limited to, teaching, class or laboratory setup, grading papers, running tutorial sessions, online course support, and other instruction related activities.

*Graduate Service Assistantship (GSA)* . Students perform a professional service, in many cases with external funding for an off campus client that does not involve research in its usual sense of the word. Examples of such services might include, but not be limited to, the College of Education student performing a service project in a K-12 school system, a mass communication student implementing a new program for a radio station, or an MBA student helping a small business develop a business plan.

*Graduate Administrative Assistantship (GAA)* . Students work on campus in a nonprofessional administrative capacity providing useful services to administrative (e.g., the Library, Graduate School, Provost's Office, etc.) and/or academic units (e.g., History Department, Business College, etc.). As opposed to the other three graduate assistantship types, which are meant to contribute to a student's academic development, GAA assignments are designed to be support mechanisms in which a student receives pay for service with no expectation of an academically enriching experience.

### Eligibility

To be qualified to receive a graduate assistantship, graduate students must be recommended by their graduate program coordinator, be fully admitted (regular admission) to a degree granting graduate program, meet the applicable minimum GPA requirement, and meet one of the following enrollment requirements:

**1. Fall and Spring Students.** In the fall and spring terms, students receiving assistantships must be fully admitted (regular admission) to a degree granting graduate program, meet the applicable minimum GPA requirement, and carry a minimum course load of nine (9) graduate hours for a fulltime assistantship and five (5) graduate hours for a halftime assistantship. Audited courses are not counted toward meeting this course load requirement. Students in their final semester may request a reduced course load by petitioning the graduate dean.

**Summer New Students** . Students admitted for summer term who receive assistantships **must register for at least 1 hour in the summer term.**

**Summer Current Students.** If a student receives a summer assistantship (the period between May 16 and August 15), and the student was registered for the immediately preceding spring semester and has registered for the following fall semester, the student is not required to register for the summer term. However, the student's department may require the student to register in summer

Graduate students wishing to continue their assistantship must maintain good academic standing as defined in the Scholastic Standards Policy. No student may be concurrently assigned to more than one fulltime assistantship or two halftime assistantships.

Graduate students who are admitted to a graduate degree program with a provisional or conditional status due to academic deficiencies are not eligible for graduate assistantships. Graduate students admitted in a graduate certificate program and not in a graduate degree program are not eligible for graduate assistantships.

New students in a graduate program typically must have a 3.0 undergraduate GPA; some graduate program requirements may allow for an exception if, for example, a student meets a specified higher GPA over the final 60 hours of their undergraduate program. Continuing students must be in good academic standing for their program. The UALR Graduate School requires students to maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher, although some graduate programs may have higher or additional requirements.

New applicants for a UALR graduate assistantship must apply directly to their academic units. Continuing graduate students must reapply for assistantships in the same manner at the beginning of each fall semester thereafter.

### Appointment

Graduate assistantship appointments are made through academic units, graduate programs, the Graduate School, and administrative units of the university. The Graduate School does not hire or appoint GAs for the academic units or complete hiring forms for the academic units. Graduate assistants must be provided a letter of appointment that clearly defines the duties, term, and expectations of the graduate assistantship appointment. Funding sources for graduate assistantships include the operating budgets of the UALR Graduate School and other academic or administrative departments (internally funded assistantships), grants, gifts, or endowments (externally funded assistantships).

### Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits of graduate assistantships typically include (1) a monthly stipend based on working 20 hours per week (fulltime assistantships) or 10 hours per week (half time assistantships), (2) tuition remission equal to nine graduate hours for (fulltime assistantships) or tuition remission equal to 4.5 graduate hours for (half time assistantships). For students who have been granted an exception to the required enrollment minimums (see Eligibility), the amount of tuition remission will be equal to the total hours in which they are enrolled. The tuition support does not include student fees or books. Audited courses are not covered by the tuition remission. Tuition for undergraduate courses typically is not covered by this remission. The dollar amount of the stipend, which at a minimum will be \$3,225 (half time) and \$6,450 (fulltime), varies depending upon the funding source. While assistantships are generally based on semester, academic year, or calendar year time periods, other time periods may be required by funding sources. Students are eligible for occur during their term of service. Other time off may be allowed at the discretion of the student's supervisor or as permitted by the funding agreement.

Doctoral students with a fulltime assistantship may be eligible for partial reimbursement for the cost of their health insurance unless prohibited by state and federal laws. Please consult the Graduate School website for eligibility and for the current rate of reimbursement. Reimbursements are processed by the Graduate School and will require documentation by the end of the fall and spring semester detailing the purchase of the health insurance plan.

### Term of Assignment

The term of assignment for graduate assistantships typically follows the calendar for 9month academic faculty appointments for fall and spring semesters. The term of assignment for academic year assistantships generally is August 16th to May 15th; the term of assignment for 1/2year assistantships generally is either August 16th to December 31st or January 1st to May 15th. Terms of assignment may differ for some externally funded assistantships. Although graduate assistantships generally are not available for the summer terms, some externally funded assistantships may provide for summer term assignments.

### Standards of Conduct

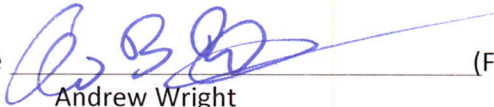
Standards of conduct for graduate assistants include performance of university duties in a manner that is professional, courteous, and conducive to a professional atmosphere. Graduate assistants are expected to comply with all work rules and standards defined by their assistantship employer and with all applicable university rules and policies. Students who are awarded scholarships funded by external grants must abide by all specified restrictions, if any, including (but not limited to) restrictions on outside employment during the term of their assistantship. International students must have an appropriate visa, meet all applicable immigration requirements,

abide by all applicable laws and regulations, and under no circumstances be employed for more than 20 hours/week.

### Forfeiture of a Graduate Assistantship

The forfeiture of a graduate assistantship may be initiated by the assistantship employer or the Graduate School. Graduate assistantships may be forfeited when the graduate student:

- Has a course load which falls below the prescribed minimum number of hours (unless an exception has been granted, see Eligibility) .
- Fails to perform the duties of the appointment or to comply with applicable rules, standards, or policies.
- Is determined to be engaged in outside employment contrary to the conditions of the appointment.
- Is found to be in violation of the UALR policies on academic integrity or research misconduct.
- The student's cumulative graduate GPA falls below the applicable minimum GPA required by the Graduate School or program (whichever is greater) or fails to meet other criteria associated with good academic standing. When an assistantship is forfeited during a semester, the student may be required to reimburse the assistantship funding source for the prorated share of their exempted tuition, and is typically responsible for FICA tax payments to the federal government. When an assistantship is forfeited due to failure to maintain a good academic standing, the student may be reemployed as a graduate assistant in a subsequent semester after the student regains good academic standing. For all other reasons for forfeiture, the student may be ineligible for future employment as a graduate assistant. The student may appeal the forfeiture of his or her graduate assistantship to the Dean of the Graduate School, whose decisions may in turn be appealed following the prescribed process for appeals as specified in the Student Handbook, depending upon whether the issue is academic, behavioral, or other type.

Signature  (Faculty Senate President) Date 4/25/2016  
Andrew Wright

RECEIVED APR 25 2016

Received in chancellor's office on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Chancellor's Action:  DISAPPROVED  
(reasons to be attached)

Chancellor's Signature  Date May 19, 2016  
Joel Anderson