



Valdosta State University

Graduate Assistant Handbook

2023-2024

A Guide to Policies and Procedures

The Graduate School

Valdosta State University

Valdosta, GA 31698

Phone: 229.333.5694

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Email: vsugradasst@valdosta.edu

Website: <https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/graduate-assistantships.php>

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Valdosta State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity, age, marital or veteran status, political affiliation, or physical or mental disability under Federal or State law.

Updated: June 12, 2023

Graduate Assistant Hiring Process

Please Be Advised:

Due to INS and IRS requirements, Graduate Assistants (GAs) are not permitted to begin working until the onboarding process is complete. The GA may only begin working on the date noted in their Appointment Form.

If you are chosen to be a Graduate Assistant, you are required to have a background check, which can take up to 2 weeks and must indicate eligibility to work, before the onboarding process can begin.

All onboarding paperwork can be completed remotely. However, the Graduate Student Services Coordinator can notarize your I-9 document and collect both the I-9 and the Security Questionnaire in person. Should you need this assistance, the Graduate Student Services Coordinator is available by appointment.

For more information and answers to any questions you may have regarding these policies and procedures, contact:

Dr. Becky K. da Cruz

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies

& Research

bdacruz@valdosta.edu

229.333.5694

or

Ms. Darli DeVane

Graduate School, Administrative

Coordinator

djdevane@valdosta.edu

229.333.5694

Step 1

Job is posted in the Graduate Assistant [portal](#).

Step 2

The **student** searches the [portal](#) for jobs & submits an application & résumé. The **supervisor** reviews applications & interviews candidates.

Step 3

The **supervisor** completes a [GA Onboarding Request Form](#).

Step 4

Upon receiving the [GA Onboarding Request Form](#), criminal background check is initiated.

Step 5

The **Student** receives email from **Accurate Background Check Services** with directions to submit information. **Students** *must* provide information within **10 days** at which time access to the background check service expires.

Step 6

If the background check results in eligibility to work, the **student** receives an email from **Equifax Compliance Center** to complete the next portion of the onboarding paperwork.

Step 7

The **GSSC** provides the student with instructions to complete the I-9 & Security Questionnaire.

Step 8

Student electronically sign their **Appointment Form** received by email from **DocuSign**. The **date** the GA may begin working is on the **Appointment Form**. The GA is *not* permitted to begin work until the HR Onboarding process is completed.

Step 9

While HR & Payroll complete final onboarding, **student** receives email directions to a) set up Direct Deposit in **OneUSG** and b) the virtual employment orientation in **Blazeview**.

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Welcome from the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research

Congratulations on your appointment as a graduate assistant at **Valdosta State University**! We are fortunate that you not only accepted our invitation to study at VSU but that you are willing to take on the important work of a graduate assistant.

You, as a Graduate Assistant, play a critical role in supporting the mission of VSU. Graduate Assistants can be appointed to positions such as teaching assistants in lecture or laboratory courses to assist undergraduate student academic success; as research assistants advancing the research mission of VSU by working alongside our faculty on exciting and innovative research projects; or even as instructors of record teaching your own course once you have at least 18 hours earned in the discipline. Most GAs, however, serve as administrative GAs to support the operation of the office in which you may be hired.

One of our goals in awarding you a graduate assistantship is to prepare you for the next step in your career. Whether you will be a teaching assistant in a lab, a research assistant to a faculty member, a coach with one of our sports teams or support personnel in one of the many offices across campus, it is my hope that your experience as a graduate assistant is a transformative one during your time at VSU. To that end, I encourage you to be open to the many opportunities that will be presented to you. For example, you may be invited to develop professional skills in your field through hands-on applications. You may be asked to teach a course with the guidance of a faculty supervisor. You may even be sought out to conduct research with a faculty mentor and to present it at a professional conference or to submit it to a peer-reviewed journal. If you engage in any of these experiences, when you reach the culmination of your time at VSU I believe you will find that your work here has not only transformed you but has also left a lasting impression on VSU.

To help you better understand your role as a graduate assistant at VSU, this guide provides the general policies and procedures. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let us know. We want to ensure you have the best experience possible at VSU!

Best wishes for an incredible academic year,

Dr. Becky A. K. da Cruz

Becky A. K. da Cruz, J.D., Ph.D.

Professor of Criminal Justice

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies & Research

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Graduate Assistant position at VSU, you must comply with the following requirements:

1. be accepted into a degree-granting masters, specialist, or doctoral program as a Regular Admission student. Students admitted on Probationary status may be eligible in limited cases, e.g. International students. Students admitted to a certificate program or non-degree programs are not eligible.
2. be lawfully present in the US, be eligible to work in the United States, and pass all relevant background checks.
3. be enrolled in at least 6 Graduate coursework hours each semester.
4. maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA (granted 1 semester probation if GPA falls below the 3.0 minimum)
5. make substantial progress toward degree completion by successfully completing 12 credits per year (6 credits per semester including summer if working as a GA during the summer). Graduate School funding will end upon the completion of 24 hours of thesis work or 4 years from the date of first hire, whichever comes first.
6. earned a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline to be taught if hired as a Graduate Assistant Instructor of Record.
 - Graduate Assistants who are Instructors of Record must attend training and be supervised by an experienced, full-time faculty member.
 - The Department assigning a Graduate Assistant as an Instructor of Record with fewer than 18 hours of graduate work in the discipline to be taught must complete the [Justification and Documentation for Exception to SACSCOC Faculty Credentials Guidelines](#) and submit it to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness prior to the start of the semester.
 - Graduate Assistant Instructors of Record can teach up to 7 credit hours.
7. All graduate assistants must have planned and periodic evaluations performed by their faculty supervisor and/or department head.

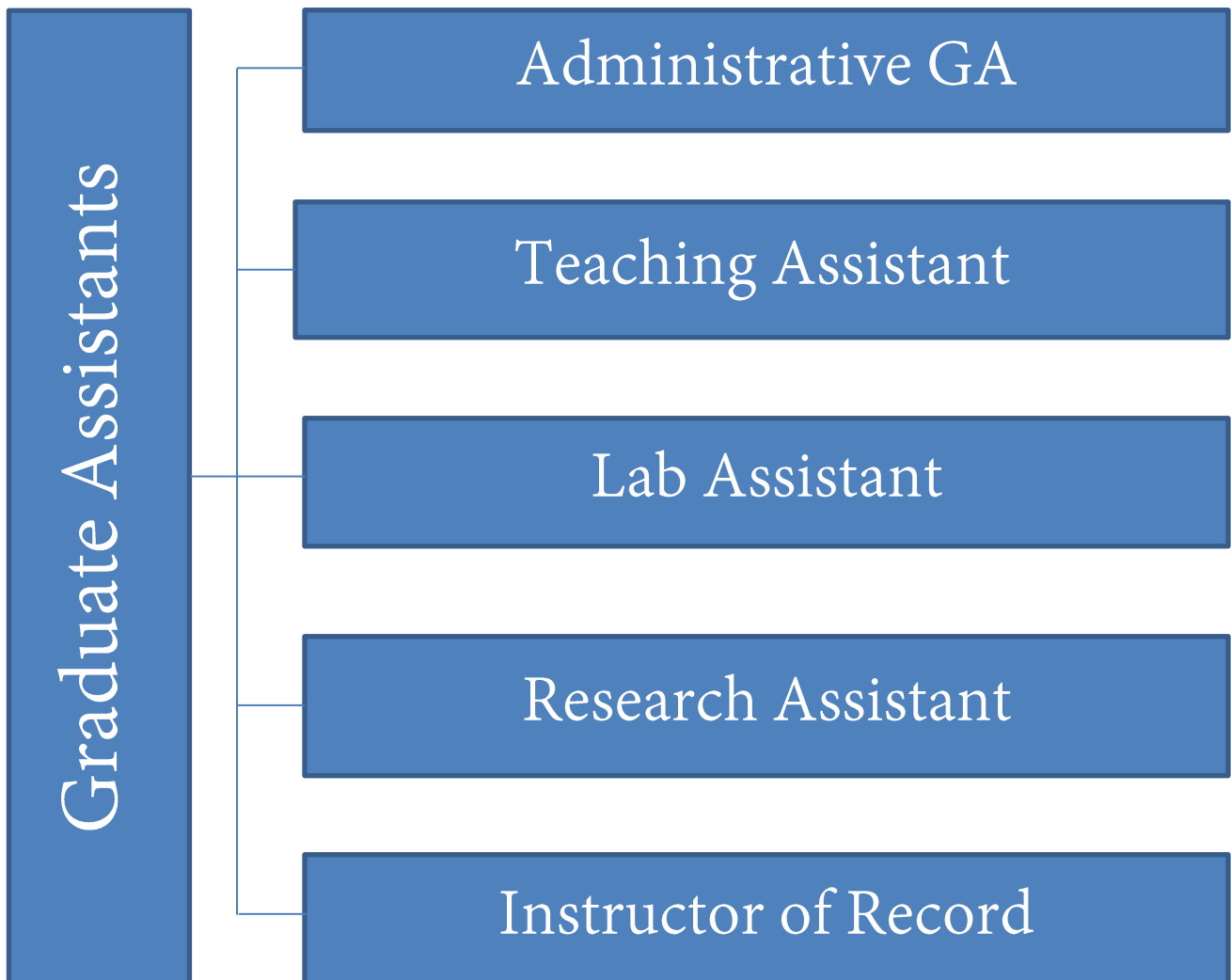


NOTE 1: Graduate Assistants are ineligible to hold a second GA position or any other position within the USG dueto one pay designation restriction.

NOTE 2: Graduate students in fully online programs are eligible to be hired as a Graduate Assistant .

Graduate Assistant Classifications

The term “Graduate Assistant” or “GA” is a general term that incorporates different categories of appointment offered at VSU.



Categories Defined

1. Administrative GA – (Most common) Performs tasks important to daily office functions such as projects and other direct assistance to faculty, staff or students.
2. Teaching Assistant – Assigned instructional duties in a course(s) under the supervision of an experienced faculty member.
3. Lab Assistant – Aids with lab setup, proctoring, answering student questions, and helps with general function of Labs.
4. Research Assistant – Primarily responsible to work directly with faculty doing research-based tasks.

5. Teacher of Record – Fully responsible for own course(s) (teaching, lesson plans, assigning grades, etc.)

GA Hiring & Onboarding Process

In order to be eligible for a graduate assistantship, you must be admitted to VSU as a degree-seeking graduate student under “regular” status before you are permitted to apply for a graduate assistantship. Students admitted in a “probationary” status may be eligible in limited circumstances.



Application Portal

Once admitted to a graduate program, graduate students may apply for graduate assistant positions through the [graduate assistant application portal](#). Newly accepted students must wait a minimum of 24 hours after acceptance before logging into the Graduate Assistantship Jobs Board located in the MyVSU portal. Departments have access to applications in the portal and will review applications, decide who to interview, and to whom to offer an assistantship. Assistantships are limited and students who apply are not guaranteed an assistantship. It is recommended that students apply for other types of [financial aid](#) as well.

Criminal Background Check

If awarded an assistantship, please be aware that all new graduate assistants are required to complete a background check. Upon accepting a graduate assistantship, the student will receive an email from **Accurate Background Check Services** with a link and directions to submit your information. You must login and provide your information within 10 days after which time the link expires and you will not have access to the background check service. Please be aware that it could take up to 2 weeks for **Accurate** to return the background check results.

Students may *not* begin working as Graduate Assistant until the background check has been returned with an “eligible” determination and the onboarding process is fully complete. The Graduate Assistant may only begin working on the date noted on the **Appointment Form**.

Onboarding Paperwork

Once the background check is complete and returned indicating your eligibility to work, you will receive a **GA Appointment form** to sign electronically via **DocuSign** (located in MyVSU portal). After the appointment form is completed you will then receive an email from **Equifax Compliance Center** to complete the majority of your onboarding paperwork.

Most of the onboarding paperwork can be completed remotely. However, part of the onboarding paperwork is the I-9 and Security Questionnaire, which require notarization. If you complete the I-9 and Security Questionnaire remotely, you will need to locate a notary for this purpose. Or, you may choose to complete in person at the Graduate School where forms can be notarized in person.

Orientation

While your onboarding paperwork is processed in Human Resources and the Payroll Department, you will receive directions in email to set up your Direct Deposit in **OneUSG** and to complete the virtual GA orientation in a **Blazeview course**. All new Graduate Assistants are required to complete a virtual employment orientation. The orientation will cover the topics below:

- Basic information concerning Assistantships
- Maintaining Graduate Assistant eligibility
- Customer Service Excellence
- Entering hours worked
- University Compliance Training Modules
- Graduate Assistant Resources

Late Hires

Graduate Assistants hired after the hiring deadline in the Fall will receive their first stipend payment in September (or February for Spring hires). The GA is expected to make up any hours missed by the late start. If the GA is hired more than a month into the semester and the stipend is pro-rated, the maximum hours to be worked will also be pro-rated.

Summer Employment

Graduate Assistantships are available in the Summer but are separate from the Academic Year assistantships. Summer assistantships have a separate Graduate Assistant Appointment Form and onboarding process. If a department chooses to continue the employment of a student who is not enrolled in summer classes, the student must be hired as a student assistant.

Congratulations and **Welcome** to the **VSU** family!!

VSU Employee

As an employee of VSU, there are rights, responsibilities, and guiding principles that apply.

Mission Statement

VSU's graduate assistantships are designed to promote the research, teaching and service responsibilities of the University and to provide graduate students with valuable professional development opportunities while earning a graduate degree. Therefore, the graduate assistantship involves the dual responsibilities of maintaining satisfactory academic performance and successfully performing the duties assigned to you by your supervisor.

Equal Opportunity Employer

VSU employs graduate assistants of the highest quality available based on ability, experience, training, intelligence, character, and physical fitness according the needs and the strategic mission of the university. No applicant for a graduate assistantship who is otherwise qualified for employment will be excluded based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical handicap, or national origin.

Please contact [Human Resources](#) for more information about these rights. The contact information is:

Human Resources
University Center Entrance 5
229.333.5463

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

VSU is governed by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, which prohibits the discrimination on the basis of disability. VSU is committed to complying with the goals and objectives of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Persons needing accommodations should contact the [Access Office](#). For more information, call 229.245.2498 or email access@vsu.edu.



Graduate Assistant Responsibilities

Academic Responsibility

As a Graduate Assistant of the university, we consider your employment as secondary to your academics. While your employment is a meaningful part of your university experience, it should not interfere with or be detrimental to success in your academic program. To remain eligible as a graduate assistant, you are required to maintain a minimum of a **3.0 GPA** while taking at least **6 credit hours** per semester. GA's whose GPA drops below 3.0 or enrolled for fewer than the 6-hour minimum *will be assessed the full amount of tuition* and the assistantship will be terminated.

You should consult with your supervisor if your workload or schedule creates a conflict with your academics. Most departments will work with you to rearrange or “flex” your work schedule around heavy academic commitments such as mid-term or final exams. The maximum number of hours for you to work in a semester is noted in your **Appointment Form**. This allows flexibility in your schedule to work more than the 14- or 19-hours per week some weeks when your academic schedule is lighter and fewer hours when your academic schedule is heavier. Please make arrangements with your supervisor on how best to schedule the hours you are to work.

Appearance

Graduate Assistants are expected to dress appropriately for the type of assistantship held. Some departments may have a specific dress code to follow. The Graduate School provides the following established guidelines:

- Shoes and shirts must be worn at all times.
- If your department permits GAs to wear shorts, the shorts should be appropriate length.
- Bathing suits, tube tops, and halter tops are not allowed unless required for the assigned duties (e.g. Aquatics).

Confidentiality of Student Records

Graduate Assistants are required to maintain VSU's confidentiality policy as it pertains to the [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended \(FERPA\)](#), the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPPA\)](#), and the state and [University policies](#) guaranteeing the security and confidentiality of information maintained by the University. Graduate Assistants must protect the privacy and confidentiality of student, faculty, employee, and financial information to which they have access and commit to use it solely for the performance of their official duties.

Records must be treated confidentially and professionally. Any breach of confidentiality will result in immediate termination and may lead to other penalties.

Minimum Grade Point Average

As a graduate assistant, you must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA. Graduate assistants whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 will be terminated.

Minimum Hours Enrolled

As a Graduate Assistant, you must register for and earn credit for six (6) semester hours of graduate course work each semester in which you hold the assistantship.

Compliance Training is required for all graduate assistants within 45 days after being hired.

Follow these guidelines to prevent pressure on yourself concerning access to records:

- Do not let friends, relatives, or acquaintances know that you have access to confidential data.
- Do not use online access or paper files for any purpose other than to perform functions assigned by your supervisor.
- Report to your supervisor anyone's attempt to gain unauthorized access to information.

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

VSU, as a recipient of Federal funds, supports and complies with the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. As an employer, Valdosta State University aggressively promotes and strives to maintain a drug-free workplace for its faculty and staff.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illegal drugs by VSU employees is prohibited. Violations of this policy includes misdemeanor and/or felony drug conviction during the course of one's employment and will result in appropriate disciplinary actions being imposed by the institution. Said penalty may include suspension or termination of employment.

For more information, consult the complete VSU [Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#).

Email Policy

According to Georgia state law, email information is defined as a public record. Emails created or received by VSU employees in connection with official business is subject to the public records law and open for inspection.

Performing duties Unrelated to Position Description

Graduate Assistants may not perform work unrelated to their job description. Examples include: working on projects for a supervisor's non-University business; running personal errands; babysitting; and checking personal email, social media, internet searches. This policy does not include the hiring of student services outside of the work environment and paid for with personal funds.

Use of Office Equipment

Personal use of office equipment and supplies (i.e. computers, paper, envelopes, etc.) is not permitted during work hours or after hours. Office supplies and equipment are to be used for the sole purpose of completing the assigned tasks of the Graduate Assistant's position.

Prohibition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is not tolerated at VSU. If you are being sexually harassed by a supervisor, contact the [Human Resources](#).

Sexual harassment is the unwanted sexual attention of a persistent or offensive nature made by a person who knows, or reasonably should know, that such attention is unwanted. Sexual harassment includes sexually oriented conduct that is sufficiently pervasive or severe to unreasonably interfere with an employee's job performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment can be physical

and/or psychological in nature. Employees are prohibited from harassing other employees whether or not the incidents of harassment occur on employer premises and whether or not the incidents occur during work hours.

The range of sexual harassment include:

1. Physical assaults of a sexual nature.
2. Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments.
3. Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee or a student for exchange of sexual conduct.
4. Sexually graphic comments about a person's body.
5. Subjecting, or threats of subjecting, an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct.
6. Sexual or discriminatory displays of publications anywhere in the workplace by the employees.
7. Retaliation for sexual harassment complaints.

*Consensual relationships with subordinates (students, employees, mentees, etc.) can lead to termination.

Compliance Training

Compliance Training is required to be completed by all Graduate Assistants within 45 days of being hired and each year employed as a Graduate Assistant.

Injuries

If you are injured during work hours, you must notify your Supervisor within two hours of the injury. Your Supervisor must contact [Human Resources](tel:229.333.5709) (229.333.5709) before you go to an authorized medical provider, unless your injury requires emergency medical care.



Work Hours

Maximum Hours

The maximum number of hours Graduate Assistants are to work each semester is noted in the Appointment Form. Graduate assistants work up to 304 hours for a “19-hour per week” position or 224 hours for a “14-hour per week” position. The actual number of hours graduate assistants may work each week is flexible. GAs may work more hours some weeks and fewer hours other weeks so long as the maximum number of hours during the semester are not exceeded.

The term of the GA contract is generally 16 weeks each Fall and Spring semester beginning the Wednesday prior to the start of the semester. However, there are some GA positions (e.g. Housing and Athletics GAs) that require an earlier start date. In those cases, the modified start time will be noted in the Appointment forms or an additional Appointment Form will be issued. If the GA position requires training, orientation, or other duties prior to the start of the semester, the GA is to coordinate with their supervisor to flex their time during the rest of the semester.

Affordable Care Act Limitation

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires that Graduate Assistants not exceed a total of 1,300 hours worked in a 12-month consecutive period. If the GA works beyond the 1,300 hours s/he will not be permitted to work the remainder of that calendar year.

Reporting Time Worked

Graduate Assistants must report all hours worked in **OneUSG** per the Affordable Care Act. (ACA). The graduate assistant’s supervisor must approve the hours in **OneUSG** each. Pay stubs and W-2s are available electronically in **OneUSG**. Click here for instructions how to [Manually Enter Time as a Student Employee](#).

Work Schedule

Graduate assistants need to coordinate the hours worked each week with their supervisor. Inform your supervisor in advance if you need to take time off or change your schedule for any reason. Some Graduate Assistants will have a position that requires working holidays and/or breaks (e.g. in Athletics, Housing, etc.).

The same coordination on weekly time worked will be needed. Otherwise, GAs have holidays and breaks off.



If you know in advance that you will be late to or absent from work, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor. If something unexpected happens that causes you to be late or absent from work, contact your supervisor when you expect to be back to work.

Working More Than One Job

Graduate Assistants are ineligible to hold a second GA position or any other position within the USG due to one pay designation restriction. While GAs are permitted to work another job off-campus, it is not advisable due to priority on successful academic progress.

Rest Periods/Breaks

Graduate Assistants working more than six consecutive hours must take a 30-minute, off-the-clock, break. Graduate Assistants who work four consecutive hours are entitled to and should take a 15-minute break/rest period.

Center for South Georgia Regional Impact

Graduate Assistants are encouraged to assist the [Center for South Georgia Regional Impact \(CSGRI\)](#) in aiding the greater South Georgia community through service and leadership. This is an opportunity for GAs to fill hours during weeks in which their primary assignment does not fully utilize their time. GAs interested in this prospect can get more information from the Center's Director, Mr. Darrell Moore.



Stipend & Tuition Waiver

Graduate Assistant Stipend

Graduate Assistants are paid on the last business day of each month during the semester. During the Fall semester, the stipend is divided equally among five months (August through December) and four months in the Spring semester (January through April). However, if a GA is onboarded past the hiring deadline, the stipend will be paid over four months (September through December). Stipends are paid through direct deposit which is set up in **OneUSG** by the GA during the onboarding process.

Stipend Amounts

Academic Year (Fall & Spring Semesters)		
Categories	14-Hour	19-Hour
Administrative GA	\$4,500/yr \$2,250/sem	\$6,000/yr \$3,000/sem
Teaching Assistant	\$4,500/yr \$2,250/sem	\$6,000/yr \$3,000/sem
Lab Assistant	\$5,160/yr \$2,580/sem	\$7,000/yr \$3,500/sem
Research Assistant	\$5,160/yr \$2,580/sem	\$7,000/yr \$3,500/sem
Instructor of Record	\$6,000/yr \$3,000/sem	\$8,000/yr \$4,000/sem

Summer (May, June, July)		
Categories	14-Hour	19-Hour
Administrative GA	\$1,600	\$2,250
Teaching Assistant	\$1,600	\$2,250
Lab Assistant	\$1,935	\$2,625
Research Assistant	\$1,935	\$2,625
Instructor of Record	\$2,250	\$3,000

*Based on May, June & July. Stipend will be prorated if working one or two months instead.

Position Category Descriptions

1. Administrative GA – (Most common) Performs tasks important to daily office functions such as projects and other direct assistance to faculty, staff and/or students.
2. Teaching Assistant – Assigned instructional duties in a course(s) under the supervision of an experienced faculty member.
3. Lab Assistant – Aids with lab setup, proctoring, answering student questions, and general functions of Labs.
4. Research Assistant – Primarily responsible to work directly with faculty doing research-based tasks.
5. Instructor of Record – Fully responsible for own course(s) (teaching, lesson plans, assigning grades, etc.)

Taxes

All earnings are subject to state and federal income tax regulations. Retirement benefits are not withheld from stipends of Graduate Assistants.

Overtime

No overtime is permitted. It is possible for a Graduate Assistant to receive supplemental pay for performing work outside of their assistantship during the period of the assistantship, but only in limited situations.

Mandatory Fees

Graduate Assistants are responsible to pay [mandatory fees](#) (e.g. institutional fee, technology fee, athletic fee, etc.) in addition living expenses and textbooks. Graduate Assistants may also be charged for health insurance.

Mandatory Student Health Insurance Program

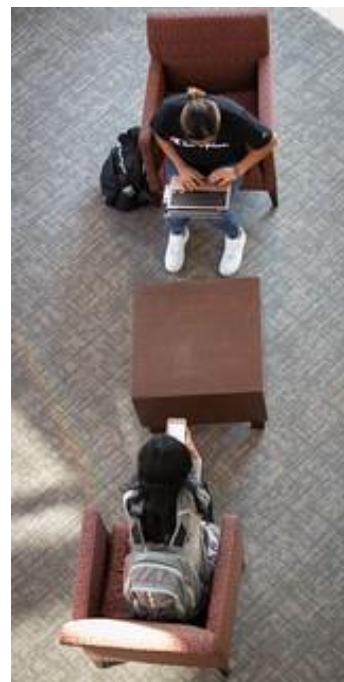
All graduate students receiving a full tuition waiver as part of a graduate assistantship are required to have health insurance and will be charged for a USG Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) policy unless the student is covered by a policy held by a parent, spouse, or employer, or if the policy does not meet the minimum standards. If the GA is covered by an insurance policy that meets the standards, the GA may waive the student insurance prior to the end of the open enrollment period. The GA may apply for the waiver online at the [United Health Care website](#) by clicking on the “waive coverage” link and providing the requested information. Waivers are approved term by term so GAs must reapply each term.

Tuition Waiver

Tuition is reduced in the following manner for both in-state and out-of-state students:

- Fall and Spring semesters – tuition waiver is applied after the payment of the first \$38 of tuition each semester, and covers up to 15 credit hours for “19-hour” GA positions and up to 9 credit hours for “14-hour” GA positions. Any additional credit hours taken will be charged to the GA at the in-state rate.
- Summer semester – tuition waiver is applied after the payment of the first \$38 of tuition, and covers up to 9 credit hours for “19-hour” GA positions and up to 6 credit hours for “14-hour” GA positions. Any additional credit hours taken will be charged to the GA at the in-state rate.

The tuition waiver is not applied to the Graduate Assistant’s account until after the Graduate Assistant Appointment Form is signed by the GA and the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies & Research.



Evaluations & Grievances

Evaluations

The performance evaluation is an integral part of every employment position. Evaluations are a valuable tool to:

- contribute to the Graduate Assistant's professional development;
- provide feedback to the GA Supervisor how to improve the assistantship experience;
- strengthen the overall employment environment.

The performance of Graduate Assistants in their assigned responsibilities is expected to be of the highest quality throughout the term of the appointment. It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to monitor the work quality and to verify that the required work hours are fulfilled each semester.

Graduate Assistant's performance is to be evaluated at least once a year. Evaluations are based on the GA's dependability, completion of job expectations, attitude, initiative, leadership, quality of work, and related expectations. The Supervisor will meet with the GA to discuss the GA's job performance. The Graduate Assistant will also evaluate their experience in their assigned assistantship. Both the [Supervisor's evaluation of the GA](#) and the [GA's evaluation of the GA experience](#) is to be submitted to Graduate Student Services Coordinator.

Disciplinary Action

Appropriate disciplinary action will result from the following behaviors by Graduate Assistants:

- Excessive tardiness
- Absenteeism
- Sloppy or unclean appearance
- Carelessness or lack of attention to work performance
- Impoliteness to fellow employees, students or the public

Supervisors may add to this list to suit the needs and requirements of their office/department. The offenses subject to discipline will follow the following actions:

- First occurrence – verbal warning
- Second occurrence – written reprimand
- Third occurrence – discharge

Grievances

VSU encourages informal resolution of grievances and complaints. Your Supervisor can assist you in resolving any work-related concerns or misunderstandings. If you have addressed the grievance with your Supervisor and do not believe the conflict has been resolved, you may seek assistance through the department head, the college dean, and the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research.

Resignation, Termination & Withdrawal

Resignation

A Graduate Assistant wishing to or needing to resign from their graduate assistantship prior to the end of the contract must submit a letter of resignation to their faculty supervisor. A two-week notice is considered to be good business practice, so it is important for you to notify your Supervisor in writing at least two-weeks in advance of the last day of your employment. If you are unable to give a two-week notice, it is advised that you consult with your Supervisor as soon as you know that you cannot fulfill the remainder of your contract.

Termination for Non-Compliance

Graduate Assistants must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA for all graduate level coursework (including grades for any courses transferred into the program of study) in order to keep their assistantship. If the GPA drops below 3.0, the assistantship will be terminated. Since the priority is on Graduate Assistants' academic progress and the requirement that graduate students must have a 3.0 to graduate, the assistantship is terminated so that the graduate student can focus on succeeding in their degree program. Graduate Assistants whose GPA drops below will have one semester probation to bring their GPA back up to a cumulative 3.0.

Termination for Cause

A Graduate Assistant's employment may be immediately terminated for the following reasons:

- Sexual harassment or harassment of any kind
- Insubordination
- Theft
- Entering an unauthorized area at any time
- Willful violation of safety regulations
- Continued failure to perform assigned duties
- Breach of confidentiality
- Negligence
- Falsifying records, reports, or information
- Intoxication or drinking on the job
- Habitual absence or tardiness
- Unauthorized absence from assigned work area
- Willful damage to University equipment or property
- Gambling

- Sleeping while on duty
- Arrested for, conviction of, or admission of guilt of a felony or of a crime involving moral turpitude during the period of employment or prior thereto if the conviction or admission of guilt was willfully concealed;
- Arrested for, conviction of, or admission of guilt in a court proceeding of any criminal drug offense;
- Unlawful manufacture, distribution, sale, use or possession of marijuana, a controlled substance, or other drugs as defined by applicable laws; teaching or working under the influence of alcohol or illegal or dangerous drugs, which interferes with the GA's performance of duties or responsibilities to the institution;
- Disruption of any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, public service, or other authorized activity;
- Violation of Board of Regents' policies.

Withdrawal from All Courses

Should a Graduate Assistant have an emergency that requires him/her to withdraw from all classes for the term i.e. hardship withdrawal, the stipend payments will cease but reimbursement of tuition will not be required. The GA should request the V.P. of Student Affairs and Dean of Students to send notice of such emergency to the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research.

Effect on Stipend and Tuition Waiver

Upon the GA's resignation or termination, the Graduate Assistant's stipend will terminate on the day of the resignation is effective or the last day worked if prior to resignation and s/he may be required to reimburse the University for tuition on a prorated basis on the length of time remaining in the semester.



Other Employment Opportunities

Federal Work-Study Program

[Federal Work-Study](#) is a federally funded grant that allows eligible students to work on a part-time job on campus, or off-campus with one of our community service partners (such as Lowndes/Valdosta Commission for Children & Youth, Goodwill Industries, and the Humane Society). Students work and earn money to go towards their college expenses while gaining valuable job skills. Students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and demonstrate financial need are eligible.

Student Assistant Program

On-campus jobs financed by the University are available. Inquiries can be made to the [Career Opportunities](#) or apply for positions through [Blazer Briefcase](#).

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

[TAP](#) is an employee supplemental education assistance program that fosters professional growth and development of its eligible employees. A full-time benefits-eligible employee of a USG institution for at least 6 months can take up to 9 credit hours per semester upon approval.

Other Employment

Career Opportunities can assist you in finding employment off campus as well including the off-campus part-time [JOBS program](#). There are opportunities for all industries.

