
Graduate Assistantship Policy Manual
Northwestern State University



Revised September 2018

Applications & Eligibility

Graduate assistantships are available for highly qualified graduate students. Assistantships are competitive and not guaranteed. Applications for assistantships are available on the Graduate School's website. Along with the application, all requirements (such as transcripts, test scores, etc.) for Graduate School must be submitted in order for the student to be considered for an assistantship.

To be eligible for a graduate assistantship, the student must:

1. be accepted into a graduate degree program;
2. achieve "Regular Admission" status; and
3. be considered a "full-time" student at Northwestern State University (i.e., the student must be enrolled in nine hours, of which at least six hours must be for graduate credit.

Eligible graduate students who have applied for an assistantship are listed on the Graduate Assistant roster that is available online for viewing. A student **must** be requested by an academic or non-academic area to be awarded an assistantship.

Appointment / Reappointment

Assistantships are awarded through the Graduate School for an academic year. To be eligible to retain the assistantship, the student must:

1. maintain a B average in all graduate courses each semester; (i.e., the student's graduate GPA must be at least 3.0);
2. be enrolled in at least nine hours, of which at least six hours must be for graduate credit unless it is the semester the student is graduating; and
3. meet all other stated requirements of the Graduate School.

Fee Waivers

Out-of-state tuition, if applicable, is waived for graduate assistants. The Graduate School will notify the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships if a graduate assistant is eligible for an out-of-state fee waiver.

Daily Attendance Reports/Work Schedule

Each department will determine a work schedule and keep an attendance log for each graduate assistant. The graduate assistant will be required to sign in and out each day, and the supervisor will be responsible for verifying that the time worked is accurate. The attendance log template is available on the Graduate School website. The department is required to keep attendance logs for each graduate assistant on file for 5 years. Any failure on the part of the graduate assistant to perform required duties, including attendance expectations and adherence to the Code of Conduct, must be documented by the graduate assistant's supervisor and maintained for the duration of the graduate assistant's employment.

Graduate Assistants are required to work **320 hours** per semester (approximately 20 hours per week evenly distributed across the semester). They are expected to report to work on time, and work through the end of the contract. Assistants are **not** required to work when the university is closed for holidays or weather. However, if a student does not work scheduled hours during a pay period, he or she must make up those hours during the month, or the time will be deducted from the paycheck. The department's timekeeper is responsible for reporting time not worked and will enter the time worked for each graduate assistant. Falsification of time reporting can result in disciplinary action by the University and termination of the assistantship. A graduate assistant may not be assigned work responsibilities for a course in which he or she is enrolled.

Appropriate Code of Conduct

As **employees** of Northwestern State University, graduate assistants are expected to:

1. maintain confidentiality,
2. refrain from inappropriate behavior,
3. maintain academic integrity,
4. adhere to all university policies,
5. dress appropriately,
6. keep a positive attitude towards all faculty/staff, students, and all constituents,
7. respect university property and equipment, and to use it only for appropriate university purposes,
8. use good judgement with and guard university keys and not lend, borrow, duplicate, or use them inappropriately,
9. perform duties without impairment or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
10. conduct personal business unrelated to their positions on their own time, and
11. perform all assigned duties in a satisfactory manner.

Resigning a Graduate Assistant Position

If a student wishes to resign from a graduate assistantship prior to the end of the contract, they should provide sufficient notice in writing to the supervisor and Graduate School. The letter should include the anticipated last date of work, and the student will only be paid through the last day they work.

Termination and Grievance Procedures

Assistantships may be **terminated** if:

1. the student violates university policy (e.g., time sheet falsification);
2. the student does not satisfactorily perform duties of assistantship;
3. the student is placed on academic probation or suspension;
4. the student drops below full-time status without prior approval; or
5. there is lack of available funding.

Notification of termination may be done in writing or in person by the immediate supervisor. The graduate assistant's supervisor should supply notice of termination in writing to the Graduate School.

Graduate assistants have the right to respond to complaints and present evidence in their defense. Upon request, graduate assistants will be informed of grievance procedures and given an opportunity to initiate an appeal through specified channels specified.