

**ECU GRADUATE SCHOOL
POLICIES FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS:
AWARDS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Graduate Assistantships

Assistantships may only be awarded to graduate students enrolled in on-campus programs (minimum registration of 3 hours) that lead to a graduate degree or a certificate of advanced study at East Carolina University. Assistantship eligibility does not extend to students who have been admitted by exception, non-degree seeking students, or undergraduates.

A full time graduate assistantship (20 hours per week - fall and spring semesters) will be worth a minimum of \$7,500. Graduate assistants should not work more than twenty hours per week during the academic year. Graduate assistants are limited to thirty hours per week in the fall and spring semesters in any combination of appointments – GA/RA/TA, self-help, College Work Study, EPA/SPA. **Foreign students are limited to twenty hours per week, no exceptions** (this is a federal requirement). During first and second summer sessions, all graduate students are limited to thirty-eight hours per week.

Requests for exceptions to the 30-hour rule must be made via petition to Dr. Patrick Pellicane. All requests must state the following: Student's name and social security number, where they are in their program of study, e.g., 1st semester, 2nd year, etc., what impact working more than 30 hours a week will have upon their graduation, why this request is necessary, a summary of the job's responsibilities and list any other options that have been considered prior to making the request.

Assistantship funds will be allocated based upon each unit's established rate. Units may opt to pay their assistants at a higher rate per F.T.E. if they deem it appropriate, by using one source or multiple sources of funds. **No three-quarter or higher fte state employee may hold a graduate assistantship.**

Students are ineligible for assistantships if they are not registered by census day. Census day is defined as the day that enrollment is captured and, concurrently, how ECU's funding is awarded. A good rule of thumb to follow is to make sure that anyone on an assistantship is registered on or before the last day to add classes each semester.

In order for graduate assistants to be exempt from FICA tax, they must have a minimum registration of 4 hours for the fall and spring semesters and 3 hours in the summer. If the GA is registered for less than the stated hours FICA will be withheld. Departments paying students from sources other than state

appropriated dollars should note that the university's portion of the FICA (7.65%) will be taken from the funding source used to pay the assistantship and should therefore budget accordingly.

Students in a 30-hour program should not receive assistantship support for more than six semesters, and those in a 45-hour program should not receive assistantship support for more than nine semesters, this excludes summer sessions.

Teaching assistants assigned primary responsibility for the administration, instruction, and evaluation of students enrolled in courses must have satisfactorily completed a minimum of 18 semester hours of graduate course work in the field in which instruction is given (SACS 18-hour rule). They must also receive in-service training, be under the direct supervision of an experienced faculty member in the field, and be evaluated each semester. The Graduate School requires units to submit a request for exception to hiring non-degree or undergraduate teaching assistants when using funds awarded to them via the Graduate School. The unit should submit an e-mail request to Dr. Patrick Pellicane requesting the exception and stating that the student has the qualifications for admission to the program and will be admitted. The request should also state whether or not the student meets the 18 hour rule (if they are responsible for a class) and that they are being trained and monitored. Units utilizing their own funding, e.g., operating dollars, unexpended faculty salary dollars, grants, do not need to request exceptions.

Departments must issue a signed assistantship/fellowship agreement for each graduate assistant or fellowship recipient – (Revised August 2004). For teaching assistants the agreement must state what course(s) they are teaching, name the individual responsible for the course, name of the supervising faculty, state that the TA has been/will be trained, will be monitored and evaluated, and name the individual responsible for the evaluation. All other assistantship agreements must briefly describe the GA's duties using the descriptions listed in the Graduate Assistant Categories and include the name of the supervising faculty. **It is necessary that all units hiring graduate assistants have a copy of the completed agreement in the student's personnel file and forward a copy of the signed contract to the Graduate School office by Census Day.**

Graduate Assistants do not keep time sheets.

6/1/04