East Carolina University
Graduate Assistantship
Terms and Conditions of Appointment

Except as provided below, these Terms and Conditions apply to all graduate students being appointed as Graduate Assistants at East Carolina University and form a part of your Graduate Assistantship Contract (“Contract”). A Graduate Assistant may be appointed as a Teaching, Research, or Administrative Support Assistant or some combination thereof. The particular nature of a Graduate Assistant’s duties will be specified in writing to the Graduate Assistant by an authorized Graduate Program Director or Academic Department representative. Your appointment as a Graduate Assistant is expressly conditioned upon the following:

I. Graduate Assistantship Eligibility Criteria

All graduate students are expected to meet the following criteria to maintain eligibility for a Graduate Assistantship:

a. Regular admission to an ECU graduate degree program
b. Maintain good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in the program. Newly admitted applicants will have the first 9 credits attempted in the program within which to establish a 3.0 GPA;
c. Satisfactory progress toward the degree, as determined by the director of your academic program;
d. Maintaining appropriate visa status and work permissions to permit lawful performance as a graduate assistant; and
e. Performance of assigned duties in a timely and competent fashion, as determined by your faculty or program supervisor.

Students who withdraw from their graduate program and the Graduate School after their assistantship start date are no longer eligible for an assistantship. It is the department’s responsibility to immediately end the assistantship job and to notify the appropriate units on campus.

II. Time Limits for Support

a. Students in master’s programs may not receive assistantship support from Graduate School funds after their fifth semester of enrollment (excluding summer sessions).
b. Students in doctoral programs may not receive assistantship support from Graduate School funds after their tenth semester of enrollment (excluding summer sessions).
c. At its own discretion, a department may use its own funds in such cases where a longer length of assistantship support is necessary and appropriate.

III. Additional Requirements for Full-Time Appointments

Graduate students shall meet the following additional criteria to maintain eligibility for a full-time Graduate Assistantship (20 or more hours/0.50 or higher FTE):

a. Master’s level students must be enrolled as a full-time ECU graduate students each semester (Fall and Spring) with a minimum of nine credit hours or three credit hours of thesis or capstone project in their final term;
b. Doctoral students must be enrolled as full-time graduate students each semester (Fall and Spring) with a minimum of nine credit hours;

c. Graduate assistants are limited to twenty-five hours of work per week in the fall, spring and summer semesters in any combination of appointments (GRA/GTA/GSA, self-help, College Work Study, EPA, or SPA)

d. International graduate assistants are limited to twenty hours of work per week (federal requirement)

IV. Additional Requirements for GTAs

All nonnative English-speaking Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) must demonstrate proficiency in spoken English appropriate to the demands of their teaching assistantship. English language proficiency is assessed in one of the following ways for laboratory teaching or other types of assigned teaching responsibilities where the GTA is engaged in direct interactions with undergraduate students.

a. Successful completion of the ECU Language Academy at level 5;

b. A total minimum score of 84 TOEFL iBT (internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language) and a minimum score of 24 on the speaking section;

c. A minimum score of 6.5 on the speaking portion of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam; and

d. A minimum score of 55 on the Test of Spoken English (TSE).

Students who score lower than the amounts listed above may contact the Graduate School to request an interview for an exception. A higher level of proficiency appropriate to the demands of the teaching assistantship as determined by the department is required for lecture teaching assignments.

V. Special Eligibility Criteria for Summer

Students may be employed as graduate assistants during first and/or second summer session if they have been admitted to a graduate degree program. If the student is a new graduate student in either first or second summer session he/she must be enrolled in the corresponding summer session. Graduate assistants do not have to enroll for summer session if they were enrolled the preceding Spring semester and are pre-enrolled for the subsequent Fall semester. Students who graduate at the end of the Spring semester are not eligible for an assistantship in the summer unless they have been admitted to pursue another graduate degree.

VI. Termination, Reassignment, and Reappointment

a. Unless terminated earlier, the end date of your appointment serves as your sole notice of termination; therefore, you will not be given notice of non-reappointment.

b. If you terminate or withdraw from your graduate degree program, your graduate assistantship may be terminated at the same time and the University is under no obligation to allow you to transfer to another degree classification or graduate degree program.

c. The graduate program director and/or supervising faculty member retain the right to reassign you to new duties commensurate with your prior duties and pay.
d. There is no guarantee of reappointment. If the program wishes to reappoint you at the termination of your appointment a new contract must be issued for your new appointment.

e. Notwithstanding any other provision herein, you are an “employee at will” and may be terminated at any time.

VII. **Compliance with Applicable Law and Policies**

In the performance of your duties as a graduate assistant you agree to comply with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations, as well as the policies, regulations and rules of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina and East Carolina University as written and as may be amended from time to time, including, but not limited to, the policies contained in the Graduate Catalog and the ECU Graduate School Policies for Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships: Awards and Assignments.

VIII. **Employment Classification**

Graduate assistants are classified as temporary student employees and are not permanent employees of ECU. This appointment carries with it no expectation of continued employment and no tenure or credit toward a tenured appointment. You may be eligible for health insurance coverage under certain circumstances. You may contact the Graduate School to determine your eligibility.

IX. **New Contract Required**

Changes in your appointment (e.g., type of assistantship, increase or decrease in salary, stipend or tuition payment) require a new contract signed by you and an authorized agent of the University.

X. **Choice of Law and Forum**

This Contract shall be governed, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina. The place and situs of this Contract is Pitt County, North Carolina, which shall serve as the sole forum for resolution of all issues and matters relating to the validity, construction, interpretation, and enforcement of the Contract.

__________________________________
Student Signature

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Date