

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP

A graduate assistantship is defined as any graduate student appointed to provide the Department with teaching, research, technical, or administrative assistance.

Application Procedures

The graduate student who wishes to be considered for a graduate assistantship in the Department should complete the required department application form. All applications are considered for our available assistantships. Applicants must have all required enrollment documents submitted by the deadline to be considered for available assistantships.

Appointment Procedures

At some time in the middle of February, the graduate faculty of the Department begins to consider the completed applicant files for assistantships. The faculty ranks applicants in order of preference, and the Departmental Chairperson immediately attempts to secure informal commitments from applicants chosen. When the Departmental Chairperson notifies applicants of their appointment in writing, he/she will include an informal contract which the applicant should sign and return to the Chairperson. This contract is not legally binding, but a letter intended to make a moral commitment between the applicant and the Department. The official letter offer of any position must come from the Office of the President.

Stipends For Graduate Assistants

Salaries are paid to graduate assistants in monthly checks, standard deductions apply. A graduate assistant with a 0.50 FTE will be awarded a non-resident fee waiver if an out-of-state student. Six hours of resident tuition will also be waived for residents and non-residents graduate assistants. **The graduate assistant must be enrolled in a minimum of six hours to receive these waivers.** Arrangements for medical insurance, social security, income tax deductions, and any other available benefits should be made in the University of Oklahoma's Human Resource division.

Workload For Graduate Assistants

Since one of the primary purposes of a graduate assistant is to aid the student in the successful completion of a graduate program, graduate assistants may not be appointed for more than one-half (0.5 FTE) employment without special permission of the Graduate Dean. The Department must submit written justification for all appointments greater than 0.5 FTE. In most cases, graduate assistants in the Department of Communication are assigned to teach two sections of a lower division course in communication.

A 0.5 FTE graduate teaching assistantship normally involves 20 hours per week. This includes time spent in the classroom, preparations, and office hours, etc. In general, it is expected that three office hours per week be scheduled for each course taught. 0.5FTE GTAs will hold six office hours per week.

A syllabus covering the content of certain courses is issued to all instructors at the beginning of the semester. The Director of the large section courses (COMM 1113 & COMM 2613) also holds regular meetings to facilitate coordination and quality control of the course. Any GTA assigned to teach a course will be under the supervision of a faculty member. That faculty member must approve syllabi and selection of texts.

Other duties may be assigned in lieu of teaching. Research assistants non-teaching duties should occupy approximately 20 hours per week for a 0.5 FTE non-teaching assistant. The Department feels an obligation

to caution graduate assistants about taking additional employment within or outside the University. Graduate assistants should not allow work overload to jeopardize their academic performance. The Department makes every effort to accommodate graduate student's class schedule in making teaching assignments. NOTE: *The Department of Communication will not adjust to a schedule of convenience for the student who's outside commitments conflict with University and Department schedules.*

Enrollment Load For Assistants

The graduate assistant's academic course load for each term should ensure that he/she is making satisfactory progress toward the degree. However, the minimum enrollment for fall and spring semesters is six hours, and three for the summer. Exceptions to this regulation are very rare and must be approved by the Graduate College Dean.

Termination of Graduate Assistants

If the performance of duties by the graduate assistant does not meet the requirements of the assignment, the Departmental Chairperson, course coordinator, or project director will advise the assistant both orally and in writing. An attempt to work with the graduate assistant in improving his/her performance will be made before the Department begins action toward termination. When grounds for termination exist prior to the end of the contract period, notice will be given in writing to the graduate assistant, and a copy of the notice sent to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Provost. Procedures for termination are outlined in the University's Graduate Student Handbook.

Maximum Number of Appointments to Assistantship

A graduate assistant working toward a Master's degree may not be appointed to an assistantship for more than the number of semesters required to complete the degree up to, but not to exceed, two years. Students working toward the Ph.D. may not be appointed to an assistantship in the Department for more than the number of semesters required to complete the degree up to, but not to exceed, four years. A graduate student completing both the Master's and Ph.D. degrees in the Department is limited to five years of appointment.

English Proficiency For International Graduate Assistants

International students for whom English is a second language must demonstrate oral and written English proficiency before they can be awarded an assistantship involving instruction. Assessment is provided through the Center for English as a Second Language. To qualify for a teaching assistantship, the student must pass a three-part testing sequence. **1)** Be judged proficient on the written examination. **2)** Must either score 250 out of 300 on the comprehensibility section of the "Speak Test", or must score 210 on the "Speak Test". **3)** Pass the orally administered "Teach Test". Fees for the written exam and the "Speak Test" are charged. **If this affects you, please contact Kristi at 325-3112.** All fees should be paid at OCCE Central Registration.