

DIVISION OF  
STUDENT AFFAIRS



# Graduate Assistant Supervisor Orientation

2018

# Philosophy Statement

- We need them and they need us.
- How GAs support the Division:
  - Provide support for Division programs and services;
  - Provide a diverse perspective on student engagement and student learning;
  - Provide a conduit to the UNT student experience
- How the Division supports GAs:
  - Provide training to increase effectiveness and productivity;
  - Provide professional development opportunities for GAs to gain valuable experience within their field of study;
  - Provide a positive learning and work environment through supervision, competitive compensation, and mentoring.

# Nuts and Bolts

# Hiring Process

- **Interviews and Placement**

- Positions coordinated, with very few exceptions, through the Program coordinator (M. McGuire) and the Higher Education Department.
- Positions are 1-year appointments, with very few exceptions.
- 2019 Dates
  - Returners: Late-January/Early-February
  - New Candidates:
    - Application deadline March 1; Interview Days Thursday, March 21 – Friday, March 22.

# Hiring Process

- **Interviews and Placement Cont.**

- Prior to interview days, you will have a chance to review candidate resumes and rank candidates you feel would be a potentially good fit for your position.
- Program coordinator (M. McGuire) will use this information, in coordination with candidate rankings, to develop an interview schedule.
- Similar matching process will take place after interviews.
- Program coordinator (M. McGuire) will notify departments of match **after** the Higher Education department confirms acceptance to program (for first-years).

# Hiring Process Cont.

- **Interviews and Placement Cont.**

- What if my position is still open after returner and new candidate interviews?
  - Post position in Eagle Network so you can monitor.
  - Program coordinator (M. McGuire) will continue to send resumes to department to help fill position.
  - Prior to submitting offer, make sure student has been accepted to UNT through the Toulouse Graduate School AND their departmental field of study.

# Hiring Paperwork

- **Offer Letter** (draft provided by GA Program Coordinator)
  - Start Date/End Date
  - Salary Information
    - 9-month or 12-month appointment
    - Level 1, 2, or 3 salary
      - Level 1 pay: 0-17 SCH toward degree
      - Level 2 pay: 18+ SCH toward degree
      - Level 3 pay: doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy or have all but dissertation (ABD) status (after oral exam).
      - Level 2 and 3 pay only take effect September 1.
  - Criminal History Check (CHC)
    - Form must be completed by student and student must submit to the Career Center (either in person or via mail; they need original signature).
    - Career Center will e-mail you when CHC is cleared.
  - Tuition Benefit



April 24, 2018

[Redacted]

Dear Jacob:

On behalf of the Division of Student Affairs, I am pleased to offer you the Graduate Assistant position for the NTDC and GTF Scholars programs beginning on July 1, 2018. Your monthly salary for this position will be \$1,675.61 for a 12-month position, unless otherwise arranged with your supervisor. This salary level will begin on September 1, 2018. Additionally, as a benefit of this position, UNT will provide you with \$2,525 to help cover the cost of your tuition each long semester (fall and spring), assuming you meet eligibility requirements for the Tuition Benefit Program. If you feel you meet the eligibility requirements for this program, please complete the enclosed agreement form as soon as possible ensure the prompt posting of your benefit. If you submit the agreement form and do not meet requirements, you run the risk of owing the university money back.

This job offer is contingent upon the satisfactory completion and clear results obtained on a criminal history check. Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the form you must complete to initiate this process. It must be submitted to the UNT Career Center with your original signature. This requires you to deliver it to their office (Chestnut Hall, suite 103) or mail it to the following address:

UNT Career Center  
Student Employment Office-CHC  
1155 Union Circle #310859  
Denton, TX 76203-5017

On your first day of employment, you will be required to provide documentation that establish your identity and employment eligibility. These documents will be reviewed and recorded on the Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) form. If you are unsure of what documents are acceptable, please visit <http://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-9.pdf>.

If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this document, feel free to contact us for clarification. Otherwise, **please indicate your acceptance of this offer by returning a signed copy of this letter to our office.** In accepting our employment offer, you acknowledge that your employment will be on an at-will basis and that neither you nor any University representative has entered into a contract regarding the terms or the duration of your employment.

Sincerely,

Melissa McGuire, Ph.D.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Tuition Benefit Hours

- Program Advisor (M. McGuire) will coordinate on behalf of all Division positions.
- Students who are in the Higher Education master's cohort will be given preference and will receive funding equivalent to 6 SCH each long semester.
  - Exceptions: Rec Center staff and Ph.D. in Higher Education students.
- Students who are higher education majors (but not in the cohort) and any other major that meets one of the requirements of the program (see next slide) will receive funding equivalent to 3 SCH each long semester.
- Once our hours run out, no more hours will be disbursed to GAs unless a department decides they want to purchase hours for their GAs.

# Tuition Benefit Hours Cont.

- **Program requirements:**
  - 9 SCH must be at the 5000 or 6000 level applicable to the degree program for which they were admitted to UNT. (If not, course load exemption must be complete.)
  - Minimum 3.0 GPA for every semester as well as cumulative for the entire academic year.
  - Work in a salaried 50% FTE (20 hours per week), benefits eligible graduate assistant position for fall & spring.
  - Admitted and enrolled in degree types: PhD, DMA, EdD, MFA, MA, MS, MM or M.Ed. (only in Higher Education).
- **Not eligible:**
  - Hazelwood Exemption
  - Staff/Dependent Educational Scholarship
  - Receiving financial support from an external source that also pays their tuition (e.g. NSF, GRF, sponsored].
  - Externally funded – none of our positions are externally funded at this time.
- Failure to not meet program expectations can lead to the student paying university back. **This is the student's responsibility.**

# Out-of-State Tuition Waivers

- Graduate Assistants are eligible to receive an in-state tuition reduction to help ease the burden of the cost of their educational experience based on their specific role.
- Resident rather than non-resident tuition is applied to a teaching or research assistant provided the student is employed at least one-half time by UNT in a position that relates to the degree sought. Requires official application approved by hiring department. This waiver waives out of state tuition and allows the student to pay in-state tuition rates.
- The waiver might be applied in one of two ways:
  - The department of study may award a competitive scholarship of at least \$1,000 to the student, which allows a student to have the out-of-state tuition to be waived, or
  - **The department of employment, along with the related faculty of area of study, should agree upon a “research agenda with deliverables” that the graduate research assistant will complete by the end of the academic term.**
    - This document should be turned into Student Accounting along with the tuition waiver form for final approval.
  - The Program coordinator (M. McGuire) will walk you through this process.

# Timekeeping

- Develop a schedule that complements the needs of your student's course load and the needs of your department.
- GAs need to complete 4 hours each weekday of a month; 80-92 hours a month (depending on the number of weeks in the month).
  - This is regardless of university closures, holidays, etc.
  - Hours can be shifted day-to-date or week-to-week within a month, but no roll over hours are allowed month-to-month.
- Maximum allowable hours per week (per Policy 15.1.27):
  - 6 SCH – max is 40 hours/week
  - 9 SCH – max is 30 hours/week
  - 12 SCH – max is 20 hours/week
- Although GAs are considered salaried employees, they are not benefits-eligible (they do not accrue sick or vacation time).
- Although a timesheet does not have to be submitted for a GA, keep a timesheet internal to your department for tracking and audit purposes.

# Leaving Assistantship

- If a GA leaves or is removed from assistantship, notify GA Program coordinator immediately.
  - Keep Program coordinator (M. McGuire) in loop if issues are on the rise.
- Upon removal, immediately submit ePAR, noting official last day and “termination.”
- If GA is being removed from payroll just over summer months, but plans to return in the fall, make sure ePAR is coded as “Summer Termination.”
  - If GA stays on during the summer, make sure an ePAR is submitted with the code “Summer Appointment.”



# **GA and Supervisor Expectations & Opportunities**



# Graduate Assistant

## Professional Development

- Away from campus:
  - GA should **not** list weekend hours or any more than four hours per business day as a part of the total hours for that month.
  - This way, the GA's opportunity to attend a conference does not take away from the productivity of the office, and the GA does not have to make up hours missed during time away from the office on business days.
- On-campus:
  - A graduate assistant may use 0-4 hours of their monthly working hours to attend professional development sessions offered on campus. Since each department and role has different types of responsibilities, it will be up to the supervisor to approve the GA's time away from the office to attend a professional development session

# Graduate Assistant Cont.

- **Professional Development Cont.**
  - Conferences/webinars/etc. – general rule of thumb is to spend about \$500 on professional development, per GA, should departmental funding be available.
  - Division GA Gatherings
    - GA Orientation: **Monday, August 13**
      - New GAs to DSA: 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
      - Returning GAs: 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
    - Monthly GA lunches
      - The first Monday of every month from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- **Mentorship**
  - Transition mentor provided by Program advisor (outside department)



# Additional Supervisor Information

- Seek to provide a meaningful experience for your GA.
  - Supervisor trainings are currently being scheduled.
  - Let me know topics you would like included.
- GA/Supervisor Expectations Worksheet
- GA Mid-Year (December) and Annual Evaluation (May)
  - Share with GA at the start of their experience.
  - Send a copy to Program coordinator (M. McGuire) in May.
- Utilize the website!
  - <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/graduate-assistant-program>

## GA/Supervisor Expectations Worksheet

Sometimes supervisors and graduate assistants have different ideas and assumptions of what their roles are and what is expected of them. This exercise is designed to allow each party to share expectations and begin discussion that will best facilitate a successful partnership. Please have this exercise completed within 14 business days of the graduate assistant's initial hire date.

### Directions:

1. The supervisor and graduate assistant should each have a blank copy of this worksheet. Do not write your names on these worksheets.
2. Read each statement carefully.
3. Rate each statement from 1 to 5 (1=Not At All Important/Completely Disagree, 5=Very Important/Completely Agree).
4. After both parties have finished the exercise, they will meet together to compare the similarities, focusing discussion around how to have a successful working relationship.

Check one – I am a:  Supervisor  Graduate Assistant

1	2	3	4	5
Not At All Important/ Completely Disagree	Not Important/ Disagree	Neutral	Important/ Agree	Very Important/ Completely Agree

Rate each of the following statements: 1-5

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Both GAs and Supervisors should have a structured, scheduled time to meet one-one-one	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Both GAs and Supervisors should be able to socialize together outside of work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. GA should attend all office staff meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. GA should be a part of the programmatic decision making processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. GA should undergo periodic performance evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. GA should dress professionally (discuss definition of what professional dress means to you)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. GA should conduct self in a professional manner (discuss what professional manner means to you)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. GA should be prepared to attend events outside typical working hours (8am-5pm)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. GA should be able to voice concerns or opinions to their supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. GA should feel freedom to pitch new ideas for his/her office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. GA should be allowed to talk to whomever they like regarding a conflict with his/her supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. GA should seek approval prior to making financial or contractual decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. GA should CC supervisor on all email communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. GA should be allowed to attend all Division events and programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. GA should be allowed to attend meetings outside the department without notifying supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. GA should not be allowed to access internet sites unrelated to work projects (aol.com, facebook.com, cnn.com, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. GA should be allowed to deal with personal matters during working hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. GA should be allowed to work on course work during working hours, but between projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. GA should not expect flexibility in working hours once they are determined for the semester	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. GA should be able to put classroom assignments before work projects during midterms and finals while at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. GA should be able to take breaks at his/her own will	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. GA should be able to invite a friend to meet him/her for lunch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. GA should not be able to arrive and leave work at his/her own discretion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. GA should build strong relationships with other GAs in the Division	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. GA should not build strong relationships with other GA supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. GA should not discuss information from his/her department with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. GA should be able to leave personal belongings in the office workspace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. GA can single-handedly make decisions concerning a large project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. GA should not have authority to delegate work to student assistants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. GA should accept all tasks and projects from his/her supervisor (no matter what is asked)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. GA should not date undergraduates, supervisors, or other graduate students who are clients/customers of the department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Supervisor should keep the GA informed of all office projects/occurrences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DSA Graduate Assistant Performance Evaluation

Graduate Assistant Name	
Supervisor	
Department	
Employment Term	

Criteria	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	Mid-Year Rating	End-of Year Rating	Action Items/Comments
Professionalism	Is dependable, punctual, honors time commitments.	N/A	N/A	
	Exhibits a professional attitude.	N/A	N/A	
	Appropriate communication style.	N/A	N/A	
	Appropriate dress attire.	N/A	N/A	
	Positively represents office to other departments or visitors.	N/A	N/A	
Job Effectiveness	Demonstrates independent thinking; willing to offer suggestions confidently.	N/A	N/A	
	Plans and organizes workload efficiently; is able to prioritize appropriately to meet deadlines.	N/A	N/A	
	Exhibits effective oral communication skills.	N/A	N/A	
	Exhibits effective written communication skills.	N/A	N/A	
	Takes initiative and demonstrates problem solving skills.	N/A	N/A	
	Produces high quality work in areas of responsibility with adequate speed and accuracy.	N/A	N/A	
	Forms positive relationships; works well with faculty, staff, and other GAs; team player.	N/A	N/A	
	Appropriately engages supervisor for feedback.	N/A	N/A	