Graduate Student Assistantships

At the University of Massachusetts Boston

Graduate Employee Organization Contract July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020
What is a Graduate Assistant?

▸ A graduate student hired on a stipend basis as a:
  ▸ Teaching Assistant
  ▸ Teaching Fellow
  ▸ Research Assistant
  ▸ Administrative Assistant

▸ Fully matriculated (actively enrolled) in a graduate degree program
  ▸ Program Fee maintains active enrollment status
  ▸ Graduate certificate programs do not qualify
Teaching Assistant

A graduate student employed on a salaried basis who is primarily assigned to instructional support activities such as the following:

- Coordinate, lead, or assist in the instructional process in preparation and direct interaction with students in lab, discussion, quiz, examination, or problem sessions.
- Provide tutoring and student consultation periods.
- Grade homework, papers, reports, and other work assigned to the enrolled students of a course.
- Grade and proctor course examinations.
- Prepare experiments and set up/dismantle laboratory materials and equipment for lab sessions.
- Additional related duties as assigned.
Teaching Fellow

A graduate student employed on a salaried basis who is instructor of record for a lecture or independent lab section of a course and has independent responsibility for its teaching and grading.

Article 1.03(b)
A graduate student who is employed on a salaried basis to perform work primarily related to academic research or other similar work including, but not limited to, the gathering and analysis of data, conducting bibliographical searches, the development of theoretical analysis and models, the production or publication of scholarly journal and research reports, which are for the benefit of the University, its faculty, centers, institutes, or an academic staff supervisor, or a granting agency, and is secondarily for the graduate student employee’s own research. Graduate students may be employed to perform research work no directly related to their own research.
Administrative Assistant

A graduate student who is employed on a salaried basis to perform work of an administrative or technical nature which is not otherwise described by the previous sections.

Graduate employees may be asked to perform clerical or secretarial tasks only if such tasks are directly related to the graduate employee’s primary assignment. Graduate employees are not to be asked to perform work of a personal nature.

Article 1.03(d-e)
How do I hire a Graduate Assistant?

1. Creating a Job Posting
   Find and select your assistant

2. Offer & Acceptance Letter
   Agree upon and set appointment details

3. Submit Appointment to Graduate Studies
   Have appointment initiated in our HR and Student systems

Templates for each step are available from the Office of Graduate Studies
Job Postings

Job opportunities for continuing graduate students shall normally be posted. Postings shall be targeted towards graduate students. Postings must be listed on the HR Careers job listings website, made available on the web, and placed in hard copy readily accessible to graduate students in those programs to which the positions are targeted. Postings will be at the discretion of the appointing authority in cases where:

- An incumbent employee is available to fill the assistantship
- A principal investigator anticipates filling a grant funded position with a uniquely qualified student
- The assistantship is offered as an integral part of a competitively applied program
- The assistantship is offered as an integral part of a multi-year training program

These postings shall be listed as soon as the complete information becomes available to the department.
A more detailed written letter of appointment which indicates duties and responsibilities, hours and locations or work, and all other relevant information shall be provided to graduate employees prior to their assumption of the position. Where appropriate, as indicated in the job posting, assignments may be more fully negotiated between the supervisor and employee at the time of appointment offer. Additional or different terms of employment, as agreed upon by the supervisor and employee shall not exceed or increase the workload agreed upon in this (union) contract.

Once the employee has signed the employment contract, it may not be modified without the express written consent of the graduate employee and the hiring authority.

Normally, notice of employment for the academic year shall be given by August 1st. Appointments shall normally be made for the full academic year (fall and spring semesters).
Submission of Appointment to the Office of Graduate Studies

The Office of Graduate Studies coordinates the appointment and reappointment of all graduate assistants, regardless of funding source.

They will take care of:
- Pre-employment paperwork completion
- HR employment action (e-paf)
- Tuition waiver submission
- Insurance credit posting

If you don’t tell us you hired someone, none of this will happen!!!
I’ve hired a GA. Now what?

- Send them to orientation
  - Four orientation sessions are held every fall.

- Coordinate work schedules and responsibilities
  - Above and beyond the O&A Letter, make sure your GA knows what their work is and when they should be expected to work.

- Life as we know it

- If needed – discipline and/or termination
  - If your student leaves their appointment, for any reason, Graduate Studies needs to be informed so they can coordinate HR and the Bursar.
But wait, there’s more! Important details to know...

- Stipend
- Tuition Waivers
- Health & Welfare
- Payroll Deduction
- Workload and Work Year
- Proration of Benefits
- Discipline & Discharge
- Grievance & Union Representation

- Last but not least, important links and references
### Stipend

**AY18-19**
- **TA, RA, AA**
  - Full-time: $17,736
  - Three quarter: $13,302
  - Half: $8,868
  - One quarter: $4,434
- **TF**
  - Full-time: $19,236
  - Half: $9,618

**AY19-20**
- **TA, RA, AA**
  - Full-time: $18,092
  - Three quarter: $13,569
  - Half: $9,046
  - One quarter: N/A
- **TF**
  - Full-time: $19,622
  - Half: $9,811

In AY19-20, the one quarter FTE position no longer exists.
### Tuition Waivers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AY18-19</th>
<th></th>
<th>AY19-20</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three quarter</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One quarter</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tuition is defined as including any cost described as tuition. Mandatory fees are not considered tuition and will not be waived.

CAPS fees are not considered tuition and do not receive the above waivers. Any CAPS benefits follow current CAPS policy.

Program fee is not considered tuition and will not be waived.

**Article 13.04**
## Health & Welfare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Annual Plans</th>
<th>Semester Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health (SHIP)</td>
<td>Dental (HMO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cap Max %</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full time</strong></td>
<td>$1,780</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¾ time</td>
<td>$1,335</td>
<td>$113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ time</td>
<td>$890</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ time</td>
<td>$445</td>
<td>$38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Annual Limit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prorated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Plan Cost</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Should a graduate assistant opt to obtain a higher level plan, such as a PPO, if available, the University shall have no obligation to cover plan cost in excess of the amounts listed above.

Article 14.01
Payment made on behalf of the graduate assistant's selected Student Health Plan, Student Dental Plan, and Student Vision Plan shall be prorated, and applied, for each semester of appointment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Selected</th>
<th>Fall Appointment</th>
<th>Spring Appointment</th>
<th>SHIP/SDIP/SVIP Payment Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1/2 Fall payment applied in Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1/2 Fall payment applied in Fall, 1/2 Fall payment applied in Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Full Spring payment applied in Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Full Spring payment applied in Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Full Spring payment applied in Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* at no point will payment exceed ceiling as stated in 14.01 of actual charge
* payment will be prorated for late starts and early terminations according to their respective schedules
Payroll Deduction

Graduate student employees shall have the option of paying all tuition and fees customarily billed through the Bursar’s Office through bi-weekly payroll deduction. Any graduate student employees wishing to exercise this option must so notify the Bursar’s Office, on a payroll deduction authorization form, by the specified and published due date on the first graduate student bill for each semester. Any graduate student employees who do not return a signed payroll deduction authorization form by the deadline will not be permitted to pay their bill through payroll deduction. Payroll deduction authorization forms will be made available on the University website or through the electronic student system. Graduate student employees shall be notified by message on their graduate student bills and a Bursar’s Office e-mail of the website to electronically access payroll deduction authorization forms. Payroll deduction will be in five bi-weekly installments during each semester.
Workload & Work Year

The work year shall consist of two discrete employment periods corresponding to the fall and spring semesters as defined by the academic calendar.

- Fall appointments will begin the Sunday immediately prior to the start of Fall classes and end the first Saturday in January.
- Spring appointments will begin the Sunday immediately prior to the start of Spring classes and end the Saturday after Spring commencement.

There are generally no employment obligations for the graduate student employees during intersession (between fall and spring semesters), during the one-week break during the spring semester, or during the summer months, unless a different term of employment has been identified (in the O&A letter, see 8.03).
A Standard Workweek

TA, RA, AA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three quarter</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One quarter</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full</td>
<td>2 class sections per semester of appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half</td>
<td>1 class section per semester of appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignments for graduate student employees will be such that they can be reasonably expected to discharge them within the number of hours specified in the individuals’ contracts.
Proration of Benefits

Stipend; tuition waivers; health, vision, and dental insurance benefits will be prorated for any term of employment less than the regularly identified term.

Examples of proration situations:

▶ Early termination
  ▶ This may be due to discharge for just cause, or voluntary; regardless of the reason, the student has left their appointment.

▶ Late start
  ▶ The student received their appointment later into the semester or is replacing another student who has left their appointment.
Early Terminations

Any Graduate Assistant who resigned or otherwise no longer holds the position of Graduate Assistant prior to the end of a semester shall retain tuition waivers for the semester pursuant to the following:

**Fall Semester**
- Prior to September 1: 0%
- September 1-30: 25%
- October 1-30: 50%
- November 1-30: 75%
- December 1-end of semester: 100%

**Spring Semester**
- Prior to February 1: 0%
- February 1-28/29: 25%
- March 1-31: 50%
- April 1-30: 75%
- May 1-end of semester: 100%

Individuals dismissed for just cause will have a discharge date set to the last date worked.

**Article 13.05**
Late Starts

Any Graduate Assistant who assumes the position of Graduate Assistant after the start of a semester shall receive tuition waivers for the semester pursuant to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New (Non-Replace ment Appointment)</th>
<th>Replacement Appointment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall Semester</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to September 1</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1-30</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1-31</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1-30</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1-end of semester</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to February 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1-28/29</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1-31</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1-30</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1-end of semester</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Article 13.06
HELP! There’s a problem!

- Any of the technical pieces listed previously
  - Contact Office of Graduate Studies

- My assistant isn’t working out
  - Discipline & Discharge

- My assistant has an issue with me
  - Grievance & Union Representation

Most issues can be prevented by maintaining open lines of communication.
Discipline & Discharge

Any Assistant may be disciplined, suspended without pay, or discharged for just cause by the department.

Examples of just cause for the purposes of this Agreement:

a) Failure to maintain good academic standing
b) The Assistant’s withdrawal from the appropriate graduate department or assigned program.
c) Failure to perform duties and/or responsibilities in an acceptable manner.
d) Gross misconduct.
e) Failure to maintain fully matriculated status.

Except in cases of serious misconduct, progressive discipline shall be applied, which shall include specific attempts to remediate conduct or performance, including

1) an initial verbal warning;
2) a formal written warning containing a stated timeframe to meet department expectations and cc’d to the Office of Graduate Studies and the Union;
3) a second and final formal written warning containing a stated timeframe to meet department expectations and cc’d to the Office of Graduate Studies and the Union;
4) termination.

Article 7
Grievance & Union Representation

A graduate assistant is primarily with UMB as a student, however, it is important to remember that in their role as a graduate assistant they are an employee. As an employee, they are represented by a union, the Graduate Employee Organization, UAW Local 1596.

While it is hoped that any issue between a graduate assistant and a supervisor, or other member of UMB, would be resolved through normal communication methods, a graduate assistant may choose to pursue resolution via the union grievance process.

The grievance process is quite detailed and deadlines are critical. Should you find yourself a party to a grievance, please contact your Human Resources Employee Relations representative for guidance as soon as possible.
Grievance cont.

Basic Steps of the Grievance Process:

1. Informal Discussion – 7 work days to respond
   Employee and/or Union Rep present grievance to Supervisor within 20 work days of when the incident should reasonably have been known.

2. Written Dispute – 10 work days to respond
   Grievance presented to Supervisor in writing within 10 work days of step 1 deadline.

3. Chancellor Dispute – 10 work days to meet and 10 work days to respond
   Grievance presented to Chancellor, or designee, within 14 work days of step 2 deadline.

4. Arbitration

   If the employer exceeds any time limit at any step without satisfactory communication, the grievant and the Union may assume that the grievance has been denied and invoke the next step of the procedure.

   This is a basic outline, contact HR Employee Relations for full guidance.

Article 6.02
Grievance – Important Note

No reprisals of any kind shall be taken by either party to this Agreement against any unit member(s) initiating or participating in the grievance.

Collateral Consequences of a Grievance – The fact that a grievance is alleged by a member of the bargaining unit, regardless of the ultimate disposition thereof, shall not be recorded in the Official Personnel File of such member; nor shall such fact be used in making any recommendation for the work assignment of such member; nor shall such member or any other member who participated in any way in the grievance procedure be subjected to any action by the Chancellor or Chancellor’s designee, whether disciplinary or otherwise, for having processed such grievance; provided, however, that nothing herein contained shall derogate from the Chancellor’s authority to take any action that might be authorized or required to be taken to give effect to the resolution of the grievance.
GEO contract - July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020

Human Resources Employee Relations (EmployeeRelations@umb.edu)
https://hr.umb.edu/employee-relations

Office of Graduate Studies (Graduate.Studies@umb.edu)
https://www.umb.edu/academics/graduate
   Bala Sundaram, Vice Provost for Research & Dean of Graduate Studies
      Bala.Sundaram@umb.edu
   Paul Mullane, Director of Financial Management
      Paul.Mullane@umb.edu

For appropriate templates, information, and general guidance, please contact the Office of Graduate Studies.
   Rebecca Hanson, Assistant Director of Financial Management
      Rebecca.Hanson@umb.edu

Graduate Employee Organization (GEO@umb.edu)
geoumb.org