



# Grad Students with Assistantships



## *F.A.Q.'s & General Info* Policy and Rules for Assistantships

Fall 2009-Spring 2010



University of Nevada, Reno  
Statewide • Worldwide

Graduate School / Mail Stop 326

(775) 784-6869

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\*\*\*Although every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the content of this student handbook is subject to change without notice. Because circumstances frequently change within an educational institution, new decisions may affect the accuracy of published information. Please contact The Graduate School for the most current information Liz 784-1258 or 784-6869



## The Purpose and Benefit of this Booklet

The Purpose of this booklet is to give students an understanding of a graduate assistantship– including insurance, and compliance with policy and requirements to maintain the assistantship

### Getting Started

- The *Graduate Programs* offer students the assistantships. Department personnel generate all hiring documents. After signed by all required persons, the hiring packet, or extended contract docs are forwarded to the Graduate School for Data Entry.
- Program departments are responsible for making sure funds are revised, and ready to encumber stipend, and that benefits are budgeted for the student.
- Assistantships are jobs to help financially with your goal to earn a Master's, Doctorate or Both. The Graduate School wants you to know that your education is very important. This is why we monitor your progress on an assistantship.
- The Graduate School Staff is available to help you with any questions or problems during your career at UNR

- For Information Specific to Assistantships, Please Contact:

Liz Carl 784-1258



## ***How and When does the Insurance Cover Me?***

If Your assistantship is an Annual Contract of 9-12 months, you are covered for one year. For example, coverage for Fall 2008 will be from 8/15/08 through 8/15/09. Insurance dates for single semester contracts are as follows

### **Fall Semester**

08/15/20xx through 01/22/20xx

### **Spring Semester**

01/22/20xx through 06/11/20xx

(Spring option is only for students graduating in May (cannot work during the summer)).

### **Spring/Summer** (Continuous coverage-no lapse)

01/22/20xx through 08/15/20xx

### **Summer Semester**

06/11/20xx through 08/15/20xx



If you are considering buying insurance for your spouse and or children. Please contact me before the fall semester begins to get information. There is a costly provision you need to be aware of.

*Please keep in mind that changes in Insurance companies can happen every year. The best time to call about changes is before the cutoff date (August 15th). Check for preferred provider list changes, this can become costly if your provider is not on the new provider list.*



### **What about Fee Waivers?**

- Your Insurance coverage is initiated when your Fee waiver is delivered by the graduate school to the cashiers office. For 10-hour per week Assistantships, students are required to pay a portion of the insurance premium \$825.00 for a 9-12 month contract. Fee Waivers are for one semester at a time. Every semester, fee waivers are delivered to cashiers for students with assistantships by the Graduate School
- All Fee Waivers are to be delivered by The Graduate School. State Accounts and Department accounts.
- **DO NOT wait for Fee waivers to pay on your student account.**
- **Students must pay their portion and mandatory fees on E-Paws or go to cashiers office. If you wait and are assessed late fees you will have to pay the late fees.**
- Check E-Paws for the fee waiver adjustment. If any question call Liz 784-1258
- Students who have a 20-hour per week Assistantship will pay \$56.63 per credit and must enroll in 6 graduate level credits. Not more than 12 graduate level credits per semester, undergrad credits are included in total of 12 credits.
- Students who have a 10-hour per week assistantship pay \$140.69 per credit and must enroll in 6 graduate level credits. Not more than 12 graduate level credits per semester, undergrad credits are included in total of 12 credits.

**New!New! For State Funded Assistantships. Fee Waivers will not cover UNDERGRAD CLASSES starting Fall 08 semester.**

**Information for Students getting Federal Financial Aid.****Enrollment details for Full-time and Part-Time status.****More important information**

- Students who register for nine (9) graduate credits or more in a semester are considered full-time.
- For graduate assistants on any contract, six (6) graduate credits or more constitute full-time.
- To be considered full-time for financial aid purposes, all graduate students, including those on assistantships, must be enrolled in nine (9) graduate credits, to be considered part-time for financial aid reporting purposes you must be enrolled in five (5) graduate credits.
- For those graduate students who are required to take Intensive English Language Center Bridge Courses, these courses can be considered part of full registration upon approval by the Dean of the Graduate School but these courses will not count for Federal Financial Aid purposes.

While the Graduate School cannot monitor outside or additional employment for students on assistantships, such additional work is discouraged as it may impede academic success and timely progress towards degree completion. In some departments, acceptance of an assistantship is contingent upon agreeing to limited additional employment. The Graduate School is responsible for approval of graduate assistantships after a department has requested the initiation of a contract. All positions are contingent upon available funding. If you are on an assistantship, added benefits include a grant-in-aid/fee waiver and health insurance.

- The Grant-in-aid/fee waiver covers Graduate Level courses only, However, in instances where a legitimate case can be made for a graduate student to take undergraduate courses (e.g. for a second language), a letter of exception can be addressed to the Graduate Dean for his/her consideration.
- Faculty and students need to be aware that federal financial aid can be affected when a student enrolls in both undergraduate and graduate level credits. Federal financial aid is based on FULL TIME enrollment (9 credits) of Graduate level courses (600-700 level).
- An enrollment of less than 9 credits of Graduate level courses (600-700 level) will proportionately reduce federal financial aid.
- Information about Health Insurance <https://wfis.wellsfargo.com/UofNReno/>

## ***How many Hours can I work as a Graduate Student?***

- On campus, as a Graduate Student, you may work 20 hours per week. If you want to work as a Student worker, LOA, Casual Labor, or another assistantship that will require you to work 1 to 10 hours on top of your regular 20 hour assistantship, you will need permission from the Graduate School. An OVERLOAD MEMO completed and signed by your advisor, stating as to why the student is capable of maintaining GPA (minimum of 3.0) and work performance at acceptable levels. Memo also require signatures of all supervisors/jobs to accept/approve additional work load of student.
- Please read the policy for Overloads. If you accept any job category this is NOT student employment or an assistantship you will lose student status and FICA WILL be deducted from stipend/pay.
- The Graduate School will not enter an assistantship that will incur a work week more than 20 hours without the OVERLOAD MEMO. It would expedite job entry, and your pay/stipend, if you submit the memo as soon as you know that you want to work another job.
- **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CANNOT WORK MORE THAN 20 HOURS PER WEEK, NOT EVEN WITH AN OVERLAOD MEMO.**  
**(F-I, J-I ETC.)**



***What is the Policy for getting and keeping an assistantship and what happens if I do NOT comply with the policy?***

- To be awarded an assistantship, you must continually be enrolled in 6 graduate level credits during the Fall and the Spring.
- You must be admitted to a degree granting program.
- If GPA drops below 3.0, the student becomes ineligible for an assistantship
- If the student does not register for 6 graduate level credits, the Graduate school will terminate the Assistantship.
- If the student drops out of a degree granting program, the graduate school will terminate the Assistantship.
- Assistantships that are terminated during the semester, the student may be required to reimburse the GIA/Fee Waiver, NRT, and insurance.
- The Associate Dean will review on a case by case basis and determine whether the student should reimburse and the amount or non-reimburse the university.

## ***Can I receive a fee waiver for Summer Classes?***

- If your department used a state account for stipend/pay, the answer is yes. The graduate school will verify account number (1101 or 1104 account #) on your contract and fill out a state fund pooled account fee waiver for summer session. This fee waiver is good for all summer sessions.
- All other accounts are contingent on funding, if your department used Grants, Self Supporting Funds, etc. the student will need to go to the hiring department and ask them to forward the completed summer fee waiver to the graduate school.
- If you have a contract to work during the summer, students do not have to register for the summer semester.
- Although to keep student status while working during the summer, you must register for 1 (one) credit. It can be for the first or second summer session, does not have to be for both. If you decide NOT to register for one credit, FICA will be a deduction from your paycheck. You do not have to register for any classes if you do not wish to. Register no later than June 15th for the second session to insure FICA NOT DEDUCTED FROM PAY. FICA Deduction can be about \$150.00 (7%) if not registered for the first or second summer session for June and July pay period (mini session does not count). **Students with F or J visa status will not be effected by this rule and DO NOT NEED TO REGISTER FOR THE SUMMER TO KEEP STUDENT STATUS.**
- Only 1 (one) credit for summer session is needed to maintain your student status (for payroll/ tax deduction purposes FICA).



### ***Can I work more than 20 hours during the summer breaks?***

- All students can work 40 hours during the summer, spring and winter breaks. **THAT INCLUDES INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.** No students can work more than 40 hours. Spring break is around 5 days, winter break is around 22 days and summer break is around 3 mos. Please refer to the Academic Calendar or Call 784-1258

### ***Do I have to work during the breaks?***

- All time off should have been negotiated with the dept and specified in your signed Addendum which accompanies the Terms of Employment/ Contract. It is to your benefit to inquire what is expected during the holidays. If not sure, contact the hiring department to inquire what hours are needed during the breaks to fulfill your contract.

### **Wintermester-Can I receive fee waiver ?**

- **Yes**
- On state funds( 1101 and 1104 acc#) your spring fee waiver can be used for Wintermester and Spring semester. Cashiers will have fee waiver on file to apply when ready to register for Spring classes.
- All other accounts are contingent on funding . Call your department to inquire and if a fee waiver can be provided, ask department to forward to graduate school to deliver to cashiers.

***What if I need to pay my tuition fees and my contract has not been processed? I do not want to pay LATE FEES!!***

- No need to panic. You should know how many hours you are scheduled to work. Go to the Cashiers and pay your portion and mandatory fees (20-Hr. wk \$56.63 per credit, 10-Hr wk \$140.69 per credit). When documents with fee waiver are received by the graduate school your fee waiver will be check for correctness, then the graduate school will submit it to the cashiers office. Students follow up by checking your account on E-PAWS. **Do not wait for the fee waiver to pay your portion of tuition and mandatory fees.**

***What if an assistantship opens up in the middle of the semester or month? Will there be any problems with tuition or benefits?***

No Problems.

- Of course your stipend will begin with your first day of work. Your fee waiver will be delivered to cashiers to start insurance coverage and adjustments to students account will be made. Students follow up by checking E-Paws.
- **New!New!New ! Procedures pertaining to Fee Waivers**
- Students are NOT required to pick up fee waivers and submit to cashiers. Cashiers will not accept graduate assistant fee waivers from anyone. All fee waivers will accompany (not state funds) the PAF and required documents. The graduate school will check and deliver to cashiers. Students check E-Paws for adjustments to student account.



## **General Information**

### ***What if I am not a resident of Nevada? Will I have to pay out-of-state tuition fees?***

- One of the benefits of having an assistantship is that you WILL be considered a Nevada Resident, and out-of-state fees will NOT be assessed. You will pay tuition as a Nevada Resident as long as student is on an assistantship
- International students are required to include the Graduate School when you are updating your work/visa expiration dates., permanent Social Security Card # and if your status is changing ( permanent resident Card and EAD cards. Visa/work expiration dates are monitored.

### ***Do I have to take the Insurance?***

- No. The insurance is a benefit that must be offered to students with assistantships. Students can opt not to accept by signing the option on the Addendum which accompanies Employment Terms of Contract with your signature.

### ***Sexual Harassment Training Class***

- Graduate Teaching Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants will also be required to attend the Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Training Class. Contact Affirmative Action @ 784-1547

***I am going to accept a teaching assistantship. Do I have to take Grad 701 class?***

- Grad 701 is a requirement for TEACHING assistants. If you have experience teaching or have taken another teaching class, you may consider asking your department about an exception to policy memo. These memos are considered on a case by case basis.
- If you are an International Student, and English is not your country's primary language, UNR requires International students to take a SPEAK TEST at the IELC department 784-6075. The cost is \$60.00 per test .
- 
- The Grad 701 class does include the Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Training.

**NEW HIRE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

To be employed on campus, A Social Security Number Is required. To get a temporary Social Security Number to allow Human Resources to process employment, follow OISS instructions. When payroll issues a temporary SS# the department can submit New Hire Documents to Graduate School Assistantship Human Resources to process for employment. When your permanent Social Security Card is received from Social Security. The Graduate School and Payroll requires that you bring to both offices to update students information.



## Graduate School Staff

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The Graduate School is Located in the Fitzgerald Student Services  
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The Graduate School would like to  
WELCOME you to UNR and Congratulate you on your  
ASSISTANTSHIP.

As the person responsible for processing assistantship, I (Liz Carl) will help you stay in compliance with policy and requirements.

All negotiations for time off (holiday, etc.) and number of specified credits on fee waiver are between YOU and the Department that hired you to teach or do research.

Please call the Graduate School with any and All questions!

**FYI**

**The Graduate School is accessible from  
the beginning, during progression and  
finishing of your degree, so take  
ADVANTAGE!**



## Please Remember these Requirements for Students

- Students Must be Admitted to a Degree Granting Program
- Continuous enrollment (Fall and Spring) of a Minimum of 6 graduate level credits for the Duration of the Assistantship. There is a Maximum of 12 graduate credits including undergrad credits.
- Minimum cumulative **GPA of 3.0**
- International Students must submit current documentation of **work eligibility** expiration dates. Changes in status- Permanent Resident Cards and EAD cards
- All Students Awarded teaching assistantships must successfully pass **GRAD 701**. If the Student has experience teaching, an exception to policy memo may be submitted for approval to waive Grad 701
- International students who have been awarded a teaching assistantship where English is not the countries primary language, a Speak Test is required at IELC 784-6075. The cost per Speak Test is \$60.00.
- Insurance is not an automatic transaction. The cashiers need to manually enter the insurance deduction. Please check and make sure this has been done. You should receive insurance card in about 4 weeks. If you have not received your insurance card, please call Student Health Center.
- Any student who has applied for financial aid is required to report all assistantship pay and benefits to UNR and UNLV