

ACADEMIC YEAR

2020-2021

Resource Manual

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP PROGRAM



GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Communication

Graduate Assistantship Program Resource Manual

Department of Communication
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Let's get started!

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Graduate Assistantship Checklist

Fall 2020 Semester

To make sure you are on the right track, be sure that all the steps below have been covered:

- _____ I have registered for a total of 18 hours of coursework, minimum requirement for my assistantship.
- _____ I have registered for Comm 8780: Directed Research, CRN 80763, under Dr. Greg Lisby's CRN to bring my total hours up to the 18 hours.
- _____ I have checked my student account to see the status of my tuition waiver. I am aware that it will take at least 24-48 hours for my waiver to be re-activated if I make any changes to my schedule.
- _____ I understand that the regular phase of registration ends on *Friday, August 23*. Late registration starts on *Monday, August 24 – August 28* and a charge of \$50.00 will be assessed for all initial registration or if classes have to be re-added because they were dropped due to non-payment. Note: Students will not be able to register themselves after August 28. If you need to add a course to meet the assistantship requirement, you will be required to go directly to the instructor to have the class added. Note: you are encouraged to read all emails about registration deadlines to avoid additional penalties.
- _____ I have paid all of my mandatory fees and the additional \$37.50 administrative fee.
I understand that nonpayment of fees by the due dates may result in class cancellation.
- _____ I understand that student health insurance questions and concerns should be addressed to [Financial Management Center](#), 404-413-2600, Email: ship@gsu.edu 227 Sparks Hall

You must be registered for the required eighteen (18) hours before your health insurance can be activated.
- _____ I have completed my *Semester Work Schedule* and returned it to Ms. Tawanna Tookes
- _____ I have completed my *Personnel Form* and returned it to Ms. Tawanna Tookes

People you Should Get to Know



Dr. Greg Lisby – Chair

Dr. Jaye Atkinson – Associate Chair – Course Scheduling

Dr. Carrie Freeman – Graduate Director

Ms. Donna Krache – Associate Graduate Director, Digital Media Strategies

Ms. Tawanna Tookes – Graduate Administrator

Key Administrative Staff

Kristen Brown – Digital Media Coordinator

Office 823

Kristen oversees departmental media outlets (GSUTV, Journalism Video Checkout Labs, Journalism Computer Labs)

Faith LeFebvre- Administrative Specialist- Scheduling, Web Editor, Undergraduate Programs

Office 825

Faith coordinates department course schedules and performs all administrative scheduling functions; oversee updates of department website and supervise Social Media Team; oversees undergraduate operations; provides support to the Chair and Associate Chair.

Marilyn Stiggers – Operations Manager

Office 828

Marilyn manages all departmental operations including front office, oversees textbook purchasing, and supervises student assistant employees; orders supplies, performs general office duties; coordinates office space; special events coordinator

Tawanna Tookes – Graduate Program Administrator

Office 822

Tawanna is the key administrator for graduate programs; oversees admission process; manages HR processes for graduate assistants; manages graduate assistantship program; oversees confidential graduate student records; conducts graduation audits; provides support to Chair and Associate Chair

Key **N**uggets to **R**emember **A**bout the **G**raduate **A**ssistantship **P**rogram

(All Graduate Assistants are expected to take time to go through this handbook in full detail)



General Information

All graduate assistants are assigned a departmental mailbox, 8th floor, room **824** (next door to the main office). You **must** check your mailbox at least once per week for important documents or information.

The Department of Communication has several options for assistantships: graduate administrative assistants (GAAs) or graduate computer assistants (GCAs)/graduate research assistants and graduate teaching assistants (GTABs)/graduate research assistant. This generally equates to 340 total hours for teaching or lab and 180 total hours for research, for a total of 520 annual hours.

Students receive a full tuition waiver, a stipend, and a 10% discount at the university bookstore. Students are responsible for mandatory fees and a small administrative fee of \$37.50.

GRAs assist individual faculty members in their research endeavors. GAAs assist the department in carrying out its lab responsibilities under the direct supervision of a faculty member. GTABs have the independent responsibility for overseeing and teaching undergraduate courses.

Assistantships are normally awarded in the late spring, and the assistantship term is annual (i.e., running from July 1 – June 30 or August – June 30 for first year students. It is important to note that graduate assistants receiving support are required to **enroll in 18 credit hours of COMM 8780 including the summer sessions** connecting their years of funding, although summer session hours do not require a student to be in local residence.

All graduate assistants who hold a full tuition waiver must be enrolled in mandatory health insurance (go <https://sfs.gsu.edu/resources/student-health-insurance/buy-student-health-insurance/#1557852029010-f6462daf-3331>) to *sign up if you have not already done so, prior to the first day of classes in the first year of your assistantship*) or have taken the necessary steps to demonstrate that they have other health insurance coverage. Visit <https://sfs.gsu.edu/resources/student-health-insurance/waiving-out-of-ship/> to find out more information on waiving student health coverage.

PhD Graduate Assistants

The department offers Ph.D. graduate assistantships that offer teaching and research responsibilities. Graduate assistants are expected to teach or are assigned as an assistant to the equivalent of three 3-hour undergraduate courses per year and assist an appointed faculty member in his or her research endeavors. Assistantships are renewable annually for a four-year period. Renewal of assistantship depends on a successful annual performance review.

Assistantship Eligibility: To be eligible to receive a graduate assistantship, students must be enrolled for a total of eighteen (18) hours each semester (fall, spring, and summer). As part of those eighteen hours, students must register for at least three courses in both fall and spring that have announced days and times in the course schedule. Students generally register for their remaining hours by signing up for the variable credit Directed Research course under the Dr. Greg Lisby's section of COMM 8780. Students receive a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade in Directed Research based on their performance as assistants. These hours of Directed Research (COMM 8780) do not count toward the requirements for the doctoral degree. For example, in the fall or spring a typical full-time Ph.D. student with an assistantship would take 3 classes at 3 hours each, one hour of Introduction to Graduate Studies (COMM 8111), plus 8 hours of COMM 8780. Graduate students on assistantships must receive permission from the Graduate Director to take fewer than three courses that have announced days and times in the course schedule in their fall and spring semesters.

Assistantship Evaluation and Probation: At the end of the academic year, each graduate assistant participates in an individual evaluation with the chair and the graduate director. In this evaluation students receive feedback on their work as a teaching and research assistant, as well as on their progress within the academic track. The student, chair, and graduate director or graduate administrator discusses ways of improving performance in the future.

At any time, a student's assistantship may be placed on probation or be terminated altogether based on a failure to perform assigned duties. Generally, a graduate assistant should strive to: 1) consistently achieve a student response scores of 4.0-5.0 in all areas of their teaching evaluations if they have assigned teaching duties; 2) consistently receive a grade of satisfactory for their performance in Directed Research if they are assigned research duties; and 3) maintain a grade point average in graduate coursework that falls between 3.5 and 4.0. Students are also expected to show progress in professional development each year (at a *minimum*, submitting papers to conferences in year two, presenting conference papers in year three, and publishing at least one article by year four). Students will be notified at the year-end evaluation if their assistantship is put on probation or terminated, and the chair and graduate director will advise the student how to remedy problems when they lead to probation.

MA Graduate Assistants

The department generally offers MA students assistantship opportunities that are largely in labs within the department. These labs include *GSUTV*, *Journalism Video Checkout*, *Journalism Writing Labs*, *Large Lectures*, and *DeBate Labs*. We make every effort to continue funding for a full two years when students are progressing through program.

Assistantship Eligibility: To be eligible to receive a graduate assistantship, students must be enrolled for a total of eighteen (18) hours each semester (fall, spring, and summer). As part of those eighteen hours, students must register for at least three courses in spring and fall that have announced days and times in the course schedule. Students generally register for their remaining hours by signing up for the variable credit Directed Research course under Dr. Greg Lisby's section of COMM 8780. Students receive a pass/fail grade in Directed Research based on their performance as assistants. These hours of Directed Research (COMM 8780) do not count toward the requirements for the master's degree. For example, in the fall or spring a typical full-time student with an assistantship would take 3 classes at 3 hours each plus 9 hours of COMM 8780. Graduate students on assistantships must receive permission from the graduate director to take fewer than three courses that have announced days and times in the course schedule in their fall and spring semesters.

At any time, a student's assistantship may be placed on probation or be terminated altogether based on a failure to perform assigned duties. They should consistently receive a grade of satisfactory for their performance in Directed Research if they are assigned research duties and should maintain a grade point average in graduate coursework that falls between 3.5 and 4.0.

Assistantship Evaluation: An annual assessment could be held at the end of the spring semester to determine continuation of assistantship the 2nd year of funding for MA graduateassistants.

Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures

Department of Communication

1. Responsibilities of Graduate Assistants

Graduate Assistants require a minimum of approximately 15 hours of work per week on average (*10 for their GTAB/GAA assignment and 5 for their GRA assignment*).

The Department of Communication makes every effort to provide research assignments that are productive for both students and faculty. Sometimes, however, students are unavoidably assigned to faculty members outside of their preferred area. This is a learning opportunity, and the department expects students to treat it as such. It is the student's responsibility to work with and for the faculty member to whom they are assigned.

Assistantships are awarded during the spring of each year. Current Graduate Assistants who are re-assigned for the next year will continue to receive uninterrupted stipends and thus, will be expected to register for the minimum required hours (18) every summer funding is received.

Timeline

- After the first week of classes, students must develop a schedule of hours in consultation with their supervisors that designates what hours will be devoted to the laboratory and research components of their assistantships.
- At the conclusion of the second week of classes, students must file their approved schedules with Tawanna Tookes, the graduate program administrator.

Expectations

Students are expected to meet their time commitments and to make up any missed hours. Graduate Assistants are expected to perform according to the professional standards established by their supervisors.

All Graduate Assistants must check their university emails to ensure that they are receiving important information in a timely manner. **Departmental and university messages go only to the student email address and should be checked regularly.**

Graduate Assistant Absences

The Chair, Graduate Program Administrator and faculty supervisor must approve all absences from GTA, GLA, or GRA responsibilities, in advance. Note: All GTAs must submit final grade rolls to Ms. Marilyn Stiggers prior to leaving campus before the semester deadline. **ALL GRADES MUST BE POSTED BEFORE 5PM THE DAY THEY ARE DUE. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Retaining Assistantship

In order to retain the assistantship, students must sign up for a **minimum of 18 semester hours each semester, including summer**.

These hours may include directed research hours (COMM 8780). The computer number for this course is found under Dr. Greg Lisby's CRN.

Students who are assigned to teach in a laboratory or in standalone sections must enroll in Communication Pedagogy (COMM 8035) in their first year.

Graduate Assistants who are at the end of their programs and who are working exclusively on theses or dissertations should be enrolling in both directed research and in thesis/dissertation research hours.

2. Responsibilities of Faculty Supervisors

The Department of Communication makes every effort to provide research assignments that are productive for both students and faculty. Sometimes, however, students from outside the faculty member's area will unavoidably be assigned. Supervisors may have to be patient with such students, and may have to invest time and effort in training them. The Department considers this important part of faculty responsibilities, and while every effort is made to provide students that meet faculty requirements, it just isn't always possible.

Expectations

Faculty supervisors are responsible for assigning workloads commensurate with the hour commitment of each assistant. These assigned workloads should be flexible enough to accommodate course schedules and other assistantship commitments. Faculty supervisors should avoid asking Graduate Assistants to perform tasks that fall outside of the expectations of laboratory or research assignments. The faculty supervisor is also responsible for clearly communicating their professional standards to students.

Suggested Graduate Research Tasks and Assignments

- MA students may be asked to do routine tasks and work, such as locating research materials, assisting with designing or updating faculty web pages or data sets.
- PhD students should receive more mentorship and less in the way of routine tasks. They may serve as research assistants, co-authors, or be given other tasks designed to help promote their professional expertise.

Final Grading

Since the GRA enrolls under Greg Lisby's CRN, the faculty supervisor must submit the student's grade to Dr. Lisby within two days of the semester's end. The grade must be an S (for Satisfactory) or a U (for Unsatisfactory).

Performance Concerns

If a Graduate Assistant is not performing her/his responsibilities to the faculty supervisor's satisfaction, it is imperative that the faculty member first discusses the problem with the student; if that doesn't resolve the issue, the faculty member must notify the student of any continuing problem in writing. If the issue remains unaddressed, the faculty supervisor should consult with Dr. Lisby about the proper grade to give a student.



Georgia State's Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)

Georgia State University's Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) is underwritten by UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company, and is administered by UnitedHealthcare Student Resources. Our plan is in compliance with all current reform requirements mandated by the Affordable Care Act and meets the requirements of the individual mandate that individuals must have health insurance. The health plan selected by the University System of Georgia is the UnitedHealthcare Choice Plus plan.

Special Notice: Stay Informed on COVID-19

Link to FAQ page: <https://www.uhcsr.com/faqs>

Who is Eligible to Enroll in SHIP (Student Health Insurance Plan)?

- All students enrolled in six (6) or more credit hours per term, or
- All students participating in a Cooperative Education Program and enrolled in a degree-seeking program; or
- All graduate and professional students enrolled in at least three (3) graduate level credit hours and enrolled in a degree-seeking program; and
- All eligible dependents of students enrolled in SHIP. Eligible dependents are the student's legal spouse and/or dependent children under 26 years of age.

Who is Required to Enroll in SHIP?

- All graduate students who are enrolled in full-time credit hours and awarded full tuition waivers as part of their graduate assistantship award.
- All undergraduate, graduate and ESL international students holding F1 and J1 visas.
- All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in programs that require proof of health insurance. (Ex. Undergraduate, Masters, Post-Masters Nursing program)
- All graduate students receiving fellowships fully funding their tuition.
- All International Scholars

These required students are automatically enrolled and charged for the plan on their student account with the option to waive out of the plan by providing proof of comparable coverage. Students mentioned in this group, we call “Mandatory Students”. Mandatory Students are **REQUIRED** to either **ACTIVATE INSURANCE** to use it **OR COMPLETE** an **ONLINE WAIVER APPLICATION** if they have their own insurance that meets our minimum requirements for coverage.

In addition to the Student Injury and Sickness Insurance Plan, two optional plans have been added. These plans are Dental and Vision. Premiums for these plans will be paid directly to United Healthcare Student Resources.

In this section, you will find pertinent information about our insurance plan benefits, links to quick reference guides and links to finding doctors and pharmacies.

1. United HealthCare web address

<https://sfs.gsu.edu/resources/student-health-insurance/insurance-plans/#1557851617740-d1775a0e-0e80>

2. Buy Student Health Insurance

Georgia State University offers health insurance to two primary groups of students, mandatory and non-mandatory (voluntary). Those students in the mandatory group are required to carry health insurance coverage during their program of study at Georgia State. Mandatory students will be automatically enrolled in the United Healthcare Student Health Insurance Plan and charged for the insurance on their student account. If mandatory students are currently covered by an insurance plan (i.e. parent’s plan, individual plan, or family plan), they may waive out of the mandatory insurance and receive a credit on their student account.

Non-mandatory students or students that are not eligible for the mandatory plan may purchase student health insurance as part of the voluntary enrollment process with United Healthcare and pay directly to United Healthcare Student Resources (UHCSR).

Other students that require student health insurance are students participating in Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Visiting Scholars.

3. Mandatory Students

Federal regulations require mandatory students to be covered by health insurance throughout the duration of their program. The mandatory group consists of the following students:

- ☐ All graduate students awarded a Full Tuition Waiver as part of their graduate assistantship award.
- ☐ All undergraduate, graduate and English as a Second Language (ESL) international students holding F1 and J1 visas.
- ☐ All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in programs that require proof of health insurance.
- ☐ All graduate students receiving fellowships fully funding their tuition.

The students listed in the mandatory group will automatically be enrolled in the United Healthcare Student Health Insurance Plan and charged for the insurance on their student account. If the mandatory student has existing insurance coverage (i.e. parent's plan, individual plan or family plan), the mandatory student may [waive out of the insurance](#) provided by the University and receive a credit on their student account.

4. Mandatory Health Insurance Process

After the waiver period ends, students in the mandatory group will be automatically enrolled in the United Healthcare student health insurance plan. Health insurance charges for mandatory students are posted directly to their student account and payments are made to Georgia State University. Mandatory students must register for classes before the health insurance charge can be posted to their student account. Also, students receiving full-time tuition waivers will not see the health insurance charge posted their student account until after their college have applied their waiver. Insurance charges post once a day early in the morning. Therefore, if you register in the morning today, then your charges will be posted the next business day.

Although mandatory students are automatically enrolled in the United Healthcare student health insurance plan, their enrollment will need to be activated if the student needs to go to the doctor prior to the waiver period end date and/or proof of insurance is needed quickly. An insured student may use [My Account](#) to request delivery of a permanent ID card through the mail. ID Cards may also be accessed via mobile site at my.uhcsr.com. Permanent ID Cards are printed and mailed to the address on file after the open enrollment period ends.

5. SHIP Resources and Forms

<https://sfs.gsu.edu/resources/student-health-insurance/ship-resources-and-forms/>

6. Waiving out of SHIP

<https://sfs.gsu.edu/resources/student-health-insurance/waiving-out-of-ship/>

Mandatory Waiver Process

Mandatory students can waive out of the mandatory student health insurance plan if they are covered by an alternate insurance plan (i.e. individual, parent's, or employer's) that meets the minimum requirements for comparable and adequate coverage mandated by the University System of Georgia.

Prior to submitting a waiver request, a mandatory student must be registered for classes. Waiver requests must be submitted during each **semester waiver period**. Waiver requests submitted after the waiver deadline will not be considered. Once you have submitted your waiver application, it can take up to 4 business days to be reviewed to determine if the waiver will be approved or denied. You will be notified at the email address you provided in your waiver application of your approval or denial of the waiver.

Waiver Approved

Once the waiver request has been approved by United Healthcare, the student will receive an email confirmation of approval from United Healthcare. Next, Student Accounts will apply a waiver (credit) to your account within 5 business days.

Waiver Denied

If your waiver request is denied and you wish to submit an appeal, you must submit your waiver appeal to your institution's **Student Health Insurance Representative** within seven (7) business days from the date of denial. Appeals must include supporting documentation regarding your personal health insurance coverage. You must submit a letter from your insurance company verifying coverage and a copy of your insurance policy that outlines your coverage. Documentation must be in English.

Fall Semester 2020 insurance waiver dates: The waiver period for Fall Semester 2020 will open on July 8, 2020 and close on September 3, 2020. The coverage will begin on August 1, 2020 and end December 31, 2020.

Spring- Summer Semester 2021 coverage is January 1 – July 31, 2020. Spring 2021 semester insurance waiver deadline is January 21, 2020.

2020 – 2021 STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN PREMIUMS AND WAIVER DATES

Please note students who choose to participate in the Optional Training Program (OPT) are also eligible to purchase health insurance directly from UHCSR. Send your name, Panther ID, email address and date of birth to ship@gsu.edu with verification of the OPT status and UHCSR will be notified. A payment link will be sent to you with enrollment information from UHCSR.

2020 – 2021 Mandatory Student Insurance Plan Premiums				
Semester	Fall	Spring/Summer	Annual	Summer Only
Coverage Period	08/01/2020 12/31/2020	01/01/2021 07/31/2021	08/01/2020 07/31/2021	05/01/2021 07/31/2021
Student	\$1,177	\$1,163	\$2,808	\$708
Graduate Assistant Rate (receiving full-time tuition waiver or fellowship)	\$1027	\$1,381		\$708
DEPENDENT PLAN PREMIUMS				
Spouse	\$1,295	\$1,794	\$3,089	\$779
Each Child	\$1,295	\$1,794	\$3,089	\$779
All Children	\$2,590	\$3,588	\$6,178	\$1,557
Spouse+AllChildren	\$3,884	\$5,382	\$9,266	\$2,336

2019 – 2020 Student Health Insurance Waiver Dates		
Waiver Period Name	Waiver Begin Date	Waiver End Date
Fall 2020	06/22/2020	9/02/2020
Spring/Summer 2021	12/02/2020	1/21/2021
Summer 2021	04/02/2021	06/15/2021

The enrollment deadline for Voluntary (Non-Mandatory) Students is as follows:

- Annual or Fall Semester September 3, 2020
- Spring/Summer Semester January 21, 2021
- Summer Semester June 15, 2021

(The coverage will be effective the date that UHCSR receives payment for the premium. After the enrollment deadline, voluntary students will only be able to enroll with a [qualifying event](#) or wait until the next enrollment period.)

Frequently Asked Questions about Health Insurance

How do I set up My Account?

You can create your My Account by selecting Login to My Account from the Home Page. You must be enrolled in one of our plans before you can create an account. If you need additional help, watch [How to Create My Account](#).

If you are a voluntary (self-pay) student, you'll be prompted to create your My Account while enrolling online. Some voluntary enrollments may be required to go through your school. Please contact your school administration for additional details. If you need additional help enrolling online, watch [How to Enroll Online \(Voluntary students only\)](#).

Note: Depending on how your enrollment is submitted, your coverage may still be in process. Please check back later if you believe you should be covered under one of our plans but are unable to create your account.

I don't have my insurance card! How do I get another one?

Log in to [My Account](#) and select the ID card link to see a digital version. You can download, email, or fax your ID card from My Account or UHCSR Mobile App. If you want an actual card, you can request one from My Account too! If you need help, watch the [video](#). Download the app at [App Store](#) or [Play Store](#).

What should I do if I do not feel well or had an accident?

If you feel the sickness or accident is life threatening, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room immediately. If it is not life threatening and your school has a Student Health Center (SHC), go there first. In most cases, it is the most cost effective and easiest to access since they are typically on campus. If it is before or after hours, try calling the SHC number, it may refer you to local resources.

If you need to get care from another provider, your school may ask that you get a referral from the SHC. Check your plan [brochure](#) to determine if it is a requirement.

Of course, if your school does not have a SHC and it's *not* an emergency, we suggest that you use the Provider Search from the [UHCSR](#) school page to find a provider close to you.

You can also check the “Not Sure Where To Go” page in [My Account](#) or UHCSR Mobile App for additional information. If you need help, watch the [video](#). Download the app at [App Store](#) or [Play Store](#).

What should I do if the SHC is closed or I'm away from school?

If you can't go to the Student Health Center, don't worry. Our plans include access to a national network of health care providers. You can easily search the network from your school's Student Insurance page. The network search is also available from [My Account](#) and from the UHCSR app. [App Store](#), [Play Store](#)

Preferred providers are those doctors and facilities that have agreed to provide a negotiated discount to members of UnitedHealthcare insurance plans. This may lower your out of pocket costs for services received.

How do I find a preferred provider? And, why is that best?

If you can't go to the Student Health Center, don't worry. Our plans include access to a national network of health care providers. You can easily search for in-network providers from the [UHCSR](#) school page, [My Account](#) or UHCSR Mobile app. If you need help, watch the [video](#).

Preferred providers are those doctors and facilities that have agreed to provide a negotiated discount to members of UnitedHealthcare insurance plans. This may lower your out of pocket costs for services received.

I need to check on the status of a claim. How can I do that?

Log in to [My Account](#) and select the **My Claims** tab for the status of both completed and pending claims. You can also view claim status of recent claims in our mobile app. If you need help, watch the [video](#).

Where can I get a prescription filled?

Find the most convenient participating pharmacy by clicking **Find Pharmacy** on your school's [Student Insurance](#) page.

You may also locate participating pharmacies within [My Account](#) and the UHCSR app. [App Store](#), [Play Store](#)

I need someone else to call in about my claims. Is that okay?

By law, only an insured can access their secured healthcare information in [My Account](#). But, if you need someone else to act on your behalf, you can complete and submit a **Personal Representative Appointment** electronically from My Account or the UHCSR Mobile App. If you need help, watch the [video](#). Download the app at [App Store](#) or [Play Store](#)

I don't remember my coverage period. How do I look it up?

Log in to [My Account](#) and select the **My Coverage** tab to view your coverage information. For most student insurance plans, coverage starts (or is effective) the later of: when we've gotten your premium and enrollment information or the effective date of the coverage period purchased.

How can I search the site for my school or additional information?

You can search our site easily by clicking the magnifying glass icon at the top of the page and typing in your search criteria. Some tips for a successful search are:

- Make sure all the words are spelled correctly.
- Try different keywords.
- Broaden your search by trying a portion of the school name instead of the full school name.

If you are still unsuccessful, you may contact us using the [Request Information form](#).

Frequently Asked Questions about Assistantship Program



- 1. When does my assistantship start and end?** Most positions are for the entire fiscal year, starting on July 1, 2020 and terminating on June 30, 2021. For new students, the timeframe is August 24, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Please refer to your assistantship letter for more details or see Tawanna Tookes.
- 2. How many hours do I have to work each week for my assistantship?** Lab and teaching assignments usually equate to 10 hours per week. Research hours are usually 5 hours per week. Research hours should be agreed upon with both faculty supervisor and graduate assistant.
- 3. Is it possible to take on a position in another department with Georgia State University?**
Note: Graduate assistants must get the approval of the Department of Communication before taking on additional assistantship opportunities in another department within GSU. Graduate assistants can only work 20 hours per week or have a 2.5 position. Please check with Ms. Tawanna Tookes, who handles HR processes for graduate assistants. In most cases, you will not be eligible to work outside the department if you are already on support.
- 4. Is it possible to work for another state institution or agency?** The university prohibits graduate assistants from working at another institution within the University System of Georgia (USG) or at another State of Georgia executive-branch agency while working at Georgia State University. All GTABs are required to notify the department if you are seeking employment outside the USG system.
- 5. Do I have to work during semester breaks or holiday breaks?** Graduate assistants should check with supervisor about schedules. In most cases, students do not work during breaks, between semesters or holiday breaks. This is particularly true for teaching assignment. However, lab and research assistants should check with faculty supervisor.
- 6. I notice that my letter states that my appointment is for fall and spring semesters. Will I have to continue to work past spring semester?** The breakdown of hours for most positions for an annual appointment is: 340 for teaching/lab; 180 for research, for a total of 520 hours annually. It is required that graduate assistants complete all assistantship hours in order to receive a satisfactory final grade. Usually, graduate assistants would have already completed their total hours by the end of spring semester; however, in the event you have not, you must do so in order to receive a satisfactory final grade. Please note: If you are a returning graduate assistant, you are required to register in the summer for 18 hours, even if the hours are not coursework and you are not in local residence. This is in order to maintain your assistantship connected to funding.
- 7. Do I have to apply for a position for the upcoming year?** Yes. Many current graduate assistants will continue on assistantship support but the department does have to keep a record of all applications. You must re-apply and submit an updated resume by

March 1.

8. **When will I know if I have been awarded a position for the new fiscal year?** The department usually start the process of making assignments in mid-late April of each year. Announcement of awards is typically made in early – mid May.
9. **Will maymester and summer tuition be waived if I currently have an assistantship this fiscal year?** Maymester and summer semesters are considered part of the next fiscal year. Therefore, maymester and summer tuition will be waived only if you receive an assistantship for the new fiscal year. Waivers will not be placed on accounts until final decisions have been made for those receiving assistantship supports for the new fiscal year.
10. **As a graduate assistant, do I have to clean out my office space at the end of the year?** Office/cubicle spaces are allocated during the end of the spring semester. In most cases, returning graduate assistants will remain in their current space. However, there may be instances where you will have to be relocated. You will be notified by the Operations Manager if you will be relocated. Graduate Assistants are encouraged to keep your space organized at all times and especially during the summer in the event you are identified to relocate, which usually means you will only have a small window of time to do so.
11. **Who should I contact if I have additional questions?** Feel free to contact Dr. Greg Lisby, Chair, glisby@gsu.edu, Dr. Carrie Freeman, cpfreeman@gsu.edu or Tawanna Tookes, Graduate Programs Administrator at ttookes1@gsu.edu.

Frequently Asked Questions about Graduate Assistant Payroll



1. **When should I expect my first pay?** Most **new** graduate assistants will receive their first payment at the end of September 2020, if all HR paperwork was completed prior to the deadline. New graduate assistants should check with Ms. Tawanna Tookes to confirm when to expect first payment. Graduate assistants receive pay at the end of each month. The payments from September 2020 – June 2021 should be equal amounts.
2. **What steps should I take if there are discrepancies in my pay?** Graduate assistants should contact Ms. Tawanna Tookes immediately if there are any questions about pay. The department is usually able to resolve any discrepancies within a timely manner.
3. **Should I expect a delay in payment during semester breaks?** **No.** If you are on an annual appointment, there will be no breaks in monthly payment until the end of the fiscal year. If you are re-appointed for the new fiscal year, then your stipend will continue.
4. **How will my pay be adjusted if I take on additional duties?** When a graduate assistant take on an additional course to teach or research responsibilities, pay is generally adjusted and distributed over that particular semester only. For graduate assistants who are on annual appointments and take on additional duties for the summer semester, pay is usually distributed for summer work in June and July. For further explanation on how pay is distributed when graduate assistants take on additional duties, please see Ms. Tookes.
5. **What is the date of my last pay for this fiscal year?** Annual appointments will end on **June 30**, which is the last pay for the fiscal year. If graduate assistants are reappointed, July 1 is the beginning of the new fiscal year and the first pay will be **July 31**.