

Graduate Student Assistantships

- Authority** This Guide Memo is approved by the Vice Provost and Dean of Research and Graduate Policy.
- Applicability** This policy applies to the appointment of graduate students to Graduate Student Assistantships.
- Summary** This Guide Memo summarizes the regulations regarding Graduate Student Assistantship appointments at Stanford University. Definition of the Graduate Student Assistantship is followed by the criteria for eligibility to hold an assistantship, a brief description of each type of assistantship, the rules governing Tuition Allowance, and other policy matters. For questions regarding this subject, please call the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Policy, 650/723-9721.

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1. DEFINITIONS AND DISTINCTIONS

- a. **Graduate Student Assistantships** are a form of student employment, earning a compensation package including both salary and tuition allowance (TAL) for the performance of research or teaching services to the University as part of the student's academic and professional training and development.

Distinctions from Assistantships:

- **Fellowships** – Fellowship stipends are financial aid, not salary. No service is expected in return for a fellowship; it is awarded on a merit basis to assist a student in the pursuit of a degree.
 - **Hourly Employment Through Payroll** – Graduate students may be employed and paid for work unrelated to the student's academic and professional training. Such employment is not considered an assistantship appointment, does not generate tuition, and is not processed in GFS.
- b. **The Graduate Financial Support (GFS) system** is the online application used to enter all graduate student research and teaching assistantship appointments and fellowships. Although they are not matriculated Stanford graduate students, Postdoctoral Scholars' appointments also are entered in GFS. GFS also handles financial support for other non-matriculated graduate students, e.g., Visiting Researchers. Non-matriculated students are, however, not eligible for assistantships.

2. ASSISTANTSHIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- a. **Matriculation** at Stanford with an active authorization to enroll and an active graduate degree program.¹
- b. **Enrollment** – All students holding assistantships must be enrolled in each quarter in which the assistantship appointment is held. For autumn, winter and spring quarters, unless the student is on TGR status, the student must be enrolled for 8-9-10 units. Except for Terminal Graduate Registration (TGR) students, the GFS System will not allow payment of TAL unless the graduate student is enrolled full-time during autumn, winter and spring quarters. Exceptions to this enrollment requirement are allowed for Honor Co-op students, and for students with disabilities.
- c. **Relevancy** – The service performed (teaching or research) must be related to the student's academic program in order to qualify for the assistantship appointment.

NOTE: Entering and approving the assistantship appointment in Graduate Financial Support (GFS)/Worklist Manager constitutes a statement that the work involved is relevant to the student's academic program.

- d. **English proficiency for teaching assistantships** – All international students must be approved for English proficiency before being appointed to any teaching position.
 - The department that plans to appoint a student who has not been approved for teaching must ask the student to contact the English for Foreign Students Office (EFS) (650/723-1310 or tafowler@stanford.edu) to arrange an appointment to be screened.
 - EFS enters the approval of English proficiency in the GFS system, after which the assistantship appointment can be processed.
- e. **I-9 eligibility to work in the U.S.A.** – By federal regulation, all individuals receiving salary through Payroll must demonstrate eligibility to work in the U.S.A. by filing Federal Form I-9. Departments must forward necessary paperwork to Payroll in advance of the student's first paycheck. For more information, see the Payroll Manual, http://co.stanford.edu/payroll_manual/accounting/.
- f. **Social Security Number** must be on file with Payroll.

3. APPOINTMENTS ON AN EXCEPTION BASIS ONLY

- a. Exceptions to the above eligibility criteria will be considered only when no matriculated graduate student is available for the assistantship appointment. Exceptions must be requested by the department and the cognizant school dean, and must include a statement of the reasons why the exception is being requested. Exceptions require advance approval from the Office of the Dean of Research and Graduate Policy.
- b. The following constraints will apply when hiring an undergraduate or non-matriculated student:
 - Undergraduates or non-matriculated graduate students are never eligible for Tuition Allowance.
 - Payments to undergraduates or non-matriculated graduate students are made on an hourly basis, and are processed through the Human Resources Management System (HRMS), not the GFS system.

Undergraduate students should be appointed in the categories of Teaching Aide or Research Aide.

¹ Coterminal students in the Bachelor/Master program who have completed 180 units of undergraduate work are eligible for appointments in assistantship categories.