

Graduate Assistantship Orientation



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY®

The Graduate School

2024-25 Academic Year

Graduate School Staff Introductions

- Erica Hamilton, Interim Vice Provost
- Jennifer Moore, Interim Assistant Vice Provost
- Trista Shumway, Assistant Director, Programming and Communication
- Sheri DeVries, Assistant to the Vice Provost

Graduate Assistantship Orientation

Benefits &
Responsibilities

The Experience

Do's & Don'ts:
Policies &
Procedures

University
Policies

What is a Graduate Assistantship?

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: contractual work experience supporting graduate education

EXPERIENCE: research, teaching, and/or application connected to your program of study

BUILD SKILLS: develop technical and professional skills and knowledge

CAREER DEVELOPMENT: make steps towards a chosen career or discovery of possible career paths, including doctoral studies

Tuition Benefits

Half-time, AY =

9 cr hr (4.5 cr hrs in Fall; 4.5 cr hrs in Winter)

Full-time, AY =

18 cr hr (9 cr hrs in Fall; 9 cr hrs in Winter)

Tuition Waivers* Vary by Appointment Length

Full-Time, Extended = 21 cr hr (9 cr hrs in Fall; 9 cr hrs in Winter; 3 cr hr in summer)

Full-time, Extended = 24 cr hr (9 cr hrs in Fall; 9 cr hrs in Winter; 6 cr hrs in summer)

**Tuition waivers are not applicable to UG courses (< 500 number)*

Stipend & Parking Benefits

Payment Varies by Appointment Length

Parking permit
waiver for GVSU
campuses

\$3,250 per
semester for
half-time
appointments

\$6,500 per
semester for
full-time
appointments

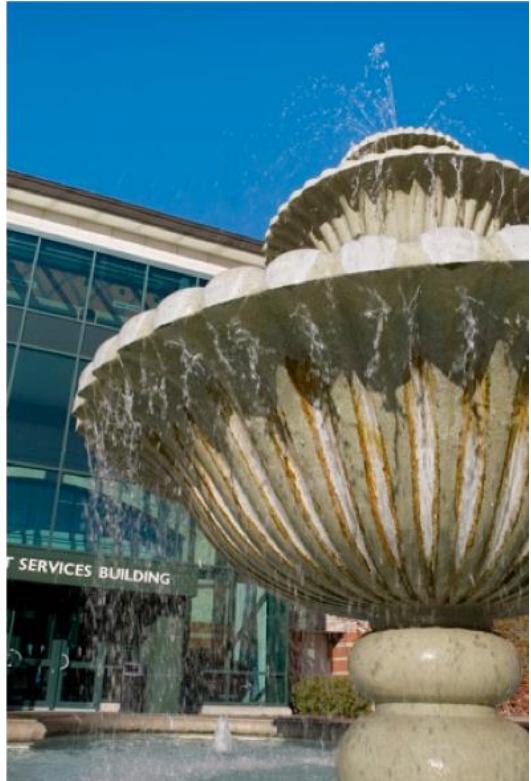
Work and Academic Responsibilities

Provide skills and services to faculty members/units/offices to enhance teaching, scholarship, and/or other outcomes of the unit to which assigned...

Half-time appointments =
10 clock hours/week

Full time appointments =
20 clock hours/week

Maintain good academic standing (≥ 3.0 GPA)



Employment Information

Pay periods are on the Student Employment website

- 1st payday ~ 3 weeks after start date
- Direct deposit
- Any appt \geq 9 months, pay periods are scheduled through breaks

Length of employment

- GA appointment start/end dates vary

Vacation

- GAs do not receive vacation other than university breaks and holidays

Tax requirements

- Federal and Michigan (I-9 & W-4 forms)
- GAs must file a city tax form if working in GR, Muskegon, TC, Detroit, regardless of residence
- Tuition waiver is taxable income if assignment is not research or teaching



What Questions Do You Have?



Starting the GA Experience

- Participate in unit/office orientation
- Meet & greet staff/faculty
- Prevents confusion and provides for a good start
- Gain information regarding your job responsibilities and assignments
- Learn your rights and what's expected of you in the position

- What have previous GA experiences been like?
- How will I be evaluated – methodology & frequency?
- Could this GA position be renewed?
- How are complaints & grievances resolved?

Ask Questions!

*Importance of
going through
orientation*

Task Assignment & Completion

- Tasks assigned to GAs should challenge you to levels of success that can be reached by building new and better skills...
- Respect timelines/deadlines and comply with them
- Demonstrate progress toward independence

What if this isn't the case for you?

- Seek out challenges and take the initiative to talk to your supervisor
- Don't settle for the minimum as the 'standard of excellence'
- A GA is a learning experience, not just a job, so seize the opportunity

Supervision and Feedback

Some GA positions require more supervision, others less.

***Generally, the level of supervision provided during your GA changes, depending on outcomes.*

As your skills/outcomes improve, supervision may be less necessary

You should seek the level of supervision you need for success over the course of your GA (early, middle, late)

Supervision should be available to you if you need it; if not, take the initiative to ask for it

All supervisors should provide you with feedback (formal and informal) on a regular basis.

Weekly meetings as needed

Seek opportunities to provide your supervisor feedback

Without feedback, how do GAs and supervisors improve?

Primary Supervision should be given by Professional Staff or Faculty Member



Evaluation

Every GA should undergo some form of evaluation process (formal or informal) before ending the appointment!

Process could be **formative**, (focus on strengths and improvement)

Process could be **summative** (“Here’s how you did...”)

Could be **structured evaluation** with GA knowing the areas assessed

GAs should evaluate their supervisors. Provide honest, open comments and suggestions for improvement of the GA experience.

***The Graduate School will send an online evaluation for completion at the end of the semester/academic year.*



What Questions Do You Have?



GA Policies & Procedures



Before You Start Working!

- **Form I-9**
- Requires original documentation for proof.
- Start the process in Workday, and finish in person.
- Must be completed within 3 days of start date
- **W-4 (how much withholding tax you prefer)**
- Grand Rapids W-4 confuses students when asked.... “What percentage of your work will occur in Grand Rapids?”
- **100% if your work is on a downtown campus (Health Campus or Pew Campus)**
- **Tax forms are completed in Workday during onboarding**



GA Policies & Procedures

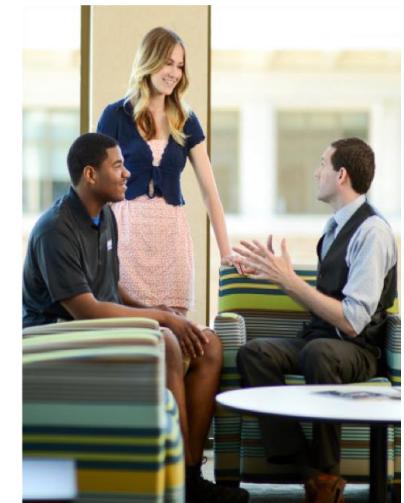
Before You
Start Working!

- Direct Deposit (Payment Elections)
 - Completed in Workday during onboarding
 - GAs without direct deposit will automatically be mailed a paper check to their permanent address.
 - Payment arrives 1-3 days after the scheduled payment date

GA Policies & Procedures

Completed forms
needed to start
work

- Students cannot work on campus until the **I-9** form is complete.
- Students must show **ORIGINAL** identifying documents to complete the I-9 Form. No photos, copies, or emails.
- Must bring in either:
 - **1 document from List A** (e.g. Passport) *OR*
 - **1 document from List B** (e.g. driver's license or student ID) *ALONG WITH* a **List C** document (e.g., birth certificate or social security card).



Tuition

- Students are responsible for tuition that the GA tuition waiver does not cover
- For example, $\frac{1}{2}$ time GA must pay for any credits beyond 4.5 credit hours
- Tuition must be **paid before the tuition deadline** or automatic course drops will occur
- Be aware! It may take some time to show your payments

If students pay their tuition before the waiver is applied, it may take several weeks for a refund to be processed

If a credit card is used, a refund will be credited to that account by the next billing cycle (~ 2-4 weeks)

Student Account Statement

- Access your Student Account via Banner log-in
 - Follow the path:

Student → Student Accounts → Student Account Information

Click on the corresponding semester statement

| Total | | | | | PAYMENT AMOU |
|---------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| * DESCRIPTION | * BALANCE | CURRENT AMT DUE | * PAYMENT AMOUNT | DEFERMENT PLAN | VIEW STATEMENT |
| Winter 2020 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | Not eligible | Click here for STATEMENT |
| Fall 2019 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | | Click here for STATEMENT |

- You will then be directed to view your student account statement

Student Account Statement

To view your statement details, click on the blue arrows below.

Winter 2020 Summary

| TERM CHARGES | TERM PAYMENTS | FINANCIAL AID | ADJUSTED BALANCE |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| \$8,710.00 | \$230.00 | \$8,511.00 | -\$31.00 |

Filter By 2020_Winter

Total CHARGES: **\$8,710.00** PAYMENTS: **\$8,741.00**

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|------------|-----------|--------|
| → Tuition and Fees | CHARGES: | \$8,480.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |
| → Housing and Meal Plans | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |
| ↓ Parking | CHARGES: | \$230.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |

| * TERM AND DESCRIPTION | * DESCRIPTION | * EFFECTIVE DATE | * CHARGES |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------|
| 2020_Winter | Parking Permit | 12/01/2019 | \$140.00 |
| 2020_Winter | Parking Permit | 12/01/2019 | \$90.00 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|--------|-----------|------------|
| → Refunds | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |
| → Misc Charges | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |
| → Misc Payments | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |
| → Payments | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |
| ↓ Financial Aid | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$6,434.00 |

| * TERM AND DESCRIPTION | * DESCRIPTION | * EFFECTIVE DATE | * PAYMENTS |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| 2020_Winter | Parking Permit Waiver | 12/02/2019 | \$230.00 |
| 2020_Winter | Graduate Assistantship Tuition | 12/02/2019 | \$3,704.00 |
| 2020_Winter | Bandstra Health Sci Schol- DNP | 12/02/2019 | \$2,500.00 |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|--------|-----------|------------|
| → Fed Pending Aid | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$2,307.00 |
| → Returned Fees and Checks | CHARGES: | \$0.00 | PAYMENTS: | \$0.00 |

Work Assignment

GA work assignments should correspond with the job description

Some deviation may be necessary, depending on the needs of the hiring unit

GAs should NOT use personal or student email addresses for GA work

Supervisors are responsible for requesting a computer/email login for their GAs

GAs may NOT be used in place of clerical staff - assignments should enhance the GA's academic experience.

Routine filing, copying, and answering phones, are **NOT** regular duties

GAs may work remotely with supervisor's approval

The GA and supervisor should create a plan for tracking work hours to ensure assignments are completed

Work Assignment

- **Class attendance is the 1st priority for all GAs**
 - GAs are NOT expected to work when they have a class
 - Supervisors and GAs should discuss work arrangements once the GA's class schedule is finalized, to determine what days and hours the student will work
- **Break and lunch schedules should be discussed with the supervisor**
 - Short breaks (\leq 15 min) are typically counted toward work hours
 - Lunch breaks ($>$ 30 min) are NOT considered part of work hours
- **With supervisor approval, GAs may work fewer hours during any given week to accommodate exam schedules, academic matters, and urgent personal matters**
 - Arrangements to make up missed hours should be agreed upon by the GA and the supervisor

Additional On-Campus Employment

- GA contracts are for 10 (half-time) or 20 (full-time) hours per week of employment
- **GAs may not have any other employment at GVSU during the GA appointment without approval from the GPD, the Graduate School, and Student Employment**
- GAs who are approved for additional employment may not exceed 25 hours per week total (GA hours + additional work hours </= 25 hrs.)
- GAs who are seeking or are offered additional work should:
 - Ask the hiring **hourly** supervisor to contact the Graduate School for approval and to confirm the number of work hours requested
 - Ask their graduate program director to provide a statement of support for the additional employment to the Graduate School to ensure the GA's academic success and work/life balance
 - **International students must consult with the Padnos International Center before accepting an additional on-campus job**

Vacation & Time Off

- GAs with AY appointments are expected to work when classes are in session. GAs **DO NOT** work:
 - Wednesday before Thanksgiving
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
 - During GVSU's fall break, winter break, spring break or between winter and spring/summer semesters
- Hiring units **MAY** require their GA to work during such breaks if they have a substantial need and if the GA is informed of this expectation at the time of hiring.

Dress Code & Appearance

- Units determine their own dress code for GAs
- GAs should dress according to their department culture and the nature of their work (e.g., in an office setting business casual is expected and in an outdoor field you might wear field gear)
- GAs whose positions require physical activity may dress appropriately
- For special events, GAs should generally dress in more formal business attire

Cancellation of Appointment



Circumstances may occur that require a GA to resign:

- Whenever possible, two weeks' notice should be given to the supervisor and The Graduate School
- Assignments should be completed to the best of the GA's ability prior to departure
- The stipend will be discontinued at the completion of the GA's last day of employment
- Tuition will be PRO-RATED and the GA will be billed for the portion of the semester tuition that remains after the resignation

Termination of Appointment

If a supervisor wishes to terminate a GA for cause (e.g., the student was unable to satisfactorily perform the duties of the assistantship), the hiring unit must do the following:

- Create a performance improvement plan
- Allow an opportunity for improvement
- Consult with the Graduate School
- Notify the student of termination in writing and provide a copy of the termination notice to the Graduate School

GA Complaint Process

GA complaints should be addressed locally, by the supervisor's office or unit

At times, it may be necessary for a GA to file an appeal related to their position/complaint

GA-related disputes or concerns should be directed to the appointing officer who may intervene or refer the issue to the appropriate university office

Complaints may include, but are not limited to job expectations not outlined in the position description, arbitrary or capricious behavior of the supervisor, or termination of the GA contract

Unresolved complaints may be appealed to The Graduate School

DOs.....

- Ask questions when needed
- Learn about unit/office cultures
- Communicate professionally
- Take initiative – go ‘above and beyond’
- Seek out opportunities to build skills and abilities
- Ask what you can do to help
- Follow GVSU policies and procedures
- Be professional
- Get to know your supervisor
- Fulfill your contract hours
- Contact The Graduate School with any questions about tuition, payroll, paperwork, or policies
- *Enjoy the experience!*

DON'Ts.....

- Do the bare minimum to get by
- Ignore rules and procedures in your office, unit, classroom, laboratory
- Skip on your contract hours; a GA is not a scholarship
- Be discourteous or disrespectful to the University Community or dress inappropriately
- Compare your GA experience directly with others (there may be differences in assignments, responsibilities, supervision, etc.)
- Violate university policies and procedures



What Questions Do You Have?



University Policies

Graduate Assistants are expected to adhere to all university policies as representatives of the GVSU community



Commitment to Inclusion & Equity and Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy



All members of the community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.



University encourages diversity and provides equal opportunity in education, employment, all of its programs, and the use of its facilities.



Members of the university community, including students, employees, faculty, staff, administrators, Board members, consultants, vendors, others engaged to do business with the University, candidates for employment or admissions, and visitors or guests have the right to be free from acts of harassment and discrimination, including sexual misconduct, as defined by the policy.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Harassment is unprofessional conduct that could reasonably be understood as:

Having the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment

1

Having the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or access to educational activities and program

2

Otherwise, it adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities or access to educational activities and programs

3

Anti-Harassment Policy

Any person who violates the University's Anti-Harassment Policy may be subject to a range of sanctions which could include, but is not limited to, dismissal, according to due process, from University employment

Harassment about age, color, disability, familial status, height, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, veteran status, or weight is a violation of university policy

Violators may also be subject to civil action or criminal prosecution because harassment and other discriminatory behavior may violate state or federal laws

Confidentiality, Data & Security Policy

Individuals with authorized access to GVSU's computer resources, information system, records or files are given access to use the University's data or files solely for the business of the University. Specifically, individuals should:

Access data solely to perform their job responsibilities

Not seek personal benefit or permit others to benefit from any data that has come to them through their work assignments

Not release University data other than what is required in completion of job responsibilities

Not exhibit or divulge the content of any record, file, or information system to any person except as it is related to the completion of job responsibilities

Confidentiality, Data & Security Policy

Individuals are not permitted to operate or request others to operate any University data equipment for personal business, to make unauthorized copies of University software or related documentation, or use such equipment for any reason not specifically required by the individual's job description





Title IX Compliance

Title IX states no person in the United States shall, based on sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any GVSU educational programming or activity

All GAs will get an email to complete Title IX training. This is required of all employees. The email will come from the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX in the Division of Inclusion and Equity

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

- FERPA pertains to everyone who works at GVSU and we are bound by professional ethics to safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of student information
- Use a specific “need to know” approach when accessing student records: there must be a legitimate university-related educational or administrative interest and a need to review an education record to fulfill one’s professional responsibility
- The information may not be disclosed to anyone who does not need this information to do their job at the university

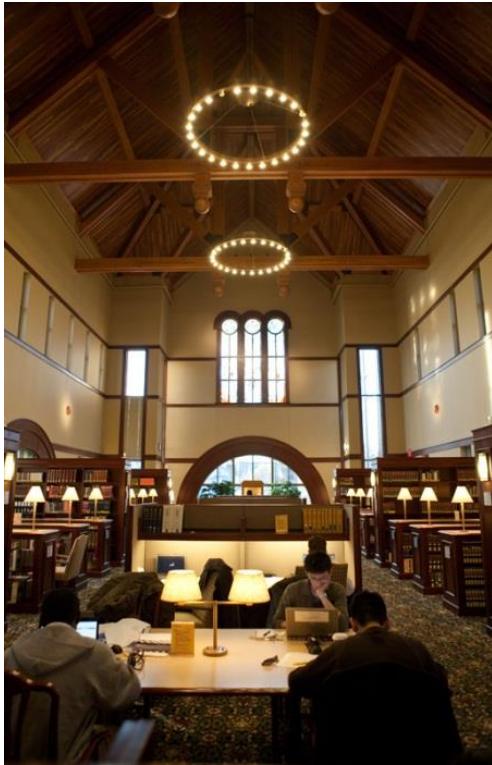
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- GVSU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended by the ADA Amendment Act (2008) and other applicable federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability
- GVSU will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request

- The ADA Act recognizes and protects the civil rights of people with disabilities
- ADA covers a wide range of disability, from physical conditions affecting mobility, stamina, sight, hearing, and speech to conditions such as emotional illness and learning disorders



A complete list of University Policies can be found by searching for “University Policies” on the GVSU home page or by going directly to this website:
<https://www.gvsu.edu/policies>



ANY QUESTIONS?



Here's to a
GREAT
Experience as a
GVSU Graduate
Assistant!

