2019-20 Academic Year

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
Welcome!

The Graduate School

- Jeffrey Potteiger, PhD, FACSM
  Dean of the Graduate School
- Mark Luttenton, PhD
  Associate Dean of the Graduate School
- Irene Fountain
  Assistant to the Dean
- Jennifer Palm
  Assistant to the Graduate School
- Corinne Jaskiewicz
  Graduate Assistant (2nd year)
- Amanda Filkins
  Graduate Assistant (1st year)
- Sara Campbell (2nd year)
- Brittany Ackerman
  Undergraduate Student Assistant
- Long Ho
  Undergraduate Student Assistant
What is a Graduate Assistantship?

- Financial support in exchange for contractual work experience that supports your graduate education
- Experience (research, teaching, application) that complements your program of study
- An opportunity to build technical and professional skills and gain valuable experience
- Initial steps towards a chosen career or discovery of possible career paths, including doctoral studies
What are the benefits of a GVSU GA?

- **Half-time, 9-mos AY = 9 cr hr** (4.5 cr hrs in Fall; 4.5 cr hrs in Winter)
- **Full-time, 9-mon AY = 18 cr hr** (9 cr hrs in Fall; 9 cr hrs in Winter)
- **Full-Time 10-mos = 21 cr hr** (9 cr hrs in Fall; 9 cr hrs in Winter; 3 cr hr in summer)
- **Full-time 12-mos = 24 cr hr** (9 cr hrs in Fall; 9 cr hrs in Winter; 6 cr hr in summer)

Tuition Remission Varies by Appointment Length

Tuition waivers are not applicable to UG courses (< 500 number)
What are the benefits of a GA?

- **Health care access**
  - [www.gvsu.edu/campushealth](http://www.gvsu.edu/campushealth)

- **Free parking**
  - (no payment for student sticker)

- **Stipend**
  - $2,000 per semester for half-time appointments
  - $4,000 per semester for full-time appointments
  - $4,000 for summer semester for those with 12-mos appointments
What are the responsibilities of a GA?

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Half-time appointments = 10 clock hours/wk</th>
<th>Full time appointments = 20 clock hours/wk</th>
<th>No requirement to work over university breaks (i.e., any time classes are not in session)</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Unless supervisor specifies otherwise, as pre-arranged with the GA</td>
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Essential information for GAs

**Pay periods listed on Student Employment website**
- 1st full paycheck: Sept. 17, 2019
- Benefits of direct deposit (earlier, more secure)
- For any appt ≥ 9 mos, paychecks are scheduled through breaks

**Length of employment - standard**
- August 26, 2019 through April 24, 2020

**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, Detroit, regardless of residence
- Tuition waiver is taxable income if assignment is not research or teaching
Questions at this point?
Today’s Orientation

GA Benefits & Responsibilities
The GA Experience
Do’s & Don’ts: Policies & Procedures
University Policies
The GA Experience…

- Participate in unit orientation
- Meet & greet staff
- 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

Importance of going through orientation

Ask questions…

- 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?
Task Assignment & Completion

Tasks assigned to GAs should challenge you to levels of success that can be reached by building new and better skills...

What if this is not the case for you?

• Seek challenge 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

Respect timelines and deadlines and comply with them

Demonstrate progress toward independence of decision-making
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 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.
Every GA should undergo some form of evaluation process (formal or informal) before ending the appointment.

- Process could be formative, focusing on strengths and things to improve; could be done regularly, at mid-point and/or conclusion.
- Process could be summative (more formal; “here’s how you did…”).
- Could be structured evaluation with GA knowing the areas assessed.

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

Graduate School has an online evaluation for completion at the end of the academic year.
Questions at this point?
Today’s Orientation

- GA Benefits & Responsibilities
- The GA Experience
- Do’s & Don’ts: Policies & Procedures
- University Policies
GA Policies & Procedures

Forms that need to be completed to be paid

- I-9
  - Requires original documentation for proof
  - Everyone should file at least 3 days prior to employment 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)

Stipend payment

- Direct Deposit
  - Complete a direct deposit form upon hire
  - Submit to Student Employment
- Paycheck pick-up (if no direct deposit) every 2 weeks at Student Assistance Centers
  - Pew Campus – DeVos Center
  - Allendale Campus – Lubbers Student Services Building
## 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!.. Banner may take some time to show your payments

| If students pay their tuition before the waiver is applied, it may take several weeks for your refund to be processed |
| If a credit card is used, a refund will be credited to your account by the next billing cycle (~ 2-4 wks) |
GA work assignments should correspond with the job description

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

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

• GAs are not expected to use their personal or student email addresses

GAs may not be used in place of clerical staff - assignment should enhance the GA’s academic experience

• Routine filing, copying, answering phones, are not to be regular duties

Working from an offsite location is discouraged unless prior approval is given by a supervisor
• Class attendance is the first 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 (≤ 15 min) are typically counted towards 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

• GAs may not exceed 20 hours per week of employment at GVSU.

• GAs may not have any other employment at GVSU during the GA appointment without approval from the Dean of the Graduate School.

• GAs who are approved for additional work should not exceed 25 hours per week in total (GA hours + additional work hours ≤ 25 hrs.)

• GAs who are seeking or are offered additional work should:
  • Ask the hiring supervisor to contact the Graduate School for approval and to confirm the number of work hours requested.
  • Ask their academic advisor or 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.
• GAs with AY appointments are expected to work when classes are in session. GAs do **not** work:
  • Wednesday before Thanksgiving
  • Martin Luther King Day
  • During fall break, winter break, spring break or between winter and Sp/Sum semesters

• However, 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

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**Vacation & Time Off**

**Units may determine their own dress code for GAs**

• GAs should dress according to their department culture and nature of their work... e.g., in an office setting, business casual is expected

• GAs whose positions require physical activity may dress for conditions

• For special events, GAs should generally dress in more formal business attire

**Dress Code & Appearance**
Termination and Cancellation of Appointment

- Circumstances may occur that require a GA to resign
  - Whenever possible, two weeks’ notice should be given to the supervisor
  - Assignments should be completed to the best of the GA’s ability prior to departure
  - The stipend will be discontinued at 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 resignation
Termination and Cancellation 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
  • Notify the student of termination in writing and provide a copy of the termination notice to the Graduate School
Complaints may include, but are not limited to issues such as job expectations not outlined in the position description, arbitrary or capricious behavior of the supervisor, or termination of the GA.

GA complaints should be addressed locally, by the supervisor’s office or unit, whenever possible.

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

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

Unresolved complaints may be appealed to the Dean of the Graduate School.

GA Complaint Process
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<th>Do...</th>
<th>Don’t...</th>
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| • Ask questions when needed  
• Become informed of unit/office cultures  
• Communicate professionally  
• Take initiative – go ‘above and beyond’  
• Seek out opportunities to build skills and abilities  
• Ask what else you could do to help  
• Follow GVSU policies and procedures  
• Be professional in your job  
• Get to know your supervisor  
• Fulfill your contract hours  
• Contact the GS regarding any questions about tuition, payroll, paperwork, or policies  
• Enjoy the experience! | • Do the bare minimum to get by, make sure to exceed expectations  
• 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 as there may be differences in assignments, responsibilities, supervision, etc. |
Questions at this point?
Today’s Orientation

- GA Benefits & Responsibilities
- The GA Experience
- Do’s & Don’ts: Policies & Procedures
- 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:

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

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

3. Otherwise adversely affecting an individual's employment opportunities or access to educational activities and programs
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 in order to perform his or her 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 their job responsibilities
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, on the basis of 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 comes from getinclusive.com and is facilitated by the Title IX coordinator in the Division of Inclusion and Equity.
• 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 in order 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

**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)**
GVSU promotes the inclusion of individuals with disabilities as part of our commitment to creating a diverse, intercultural community.

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.

- 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
Best Wishes for a Great Experience as a Graduate Assistant at GVSU!