GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY | THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

GRADUATE FACULTY & PROGRAM DIRECTOR HANDBOOK

The Graduate School
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INTRODUCTION

As a graduate faculty member at Grand Valley State University, you play a vital role in the success of our graduate students. This handbook is designed to help you understand your responsibilities, including student recruitment, enrollment management, application review, admissions, academic processes, graduation audits, and more.

While especially useful for new and recently hired faculty, this handbook also serves as a valuable reference for all graduate faculty members, including Graduate Program Directors. This handbook provides an overview of The Graduate School and outlines key responsibilities across the graduate student journey—from recruitment and advising to program completion.

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide and reference, as you contribute to graduate education at Grand Valley State University.

In partnership,

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Vice Provost for Distributed Learning
Dean of the Graduate School

1 GRADUATE EDUCATION AT GRAND VALLEY

This handbook serves as an introduction to graduate education at GVSU and your role as a graduate faculty Member. We have also included information about The Graduate School and resources offered to help you in your role as a graduate faculty member.

1.1 GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Grand Valley offers more than 48 graduate degree programs, certificates, and badges in almost all academic colleges. The Graduate School maintains an online list of graduate programs, certificates, badges, and contact information on our website: gvsu.edu/gs.

1.2 THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Graduate School provides leadership, oversight, and support for graduate education, graduate students, and faculty. We develop programming and provide advising to assist graduate students through transitions from prospective students to alumni. We oversee graduate assistantships, including appointments and orientations. The Graduate School also administers and reviews exceptions to university policies applicable to graduate education.

1.3 GRADUATE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The Graduate School maintains a *Graduate Education Policies & Procedures Manual* that encompasses all policies and procedures related to graduate study at GVSU. This document is available online at gvsu.edu/gs/manual and updated, as necessary, throughout the year.

1.4 THE ROLE OF GRADUATE FACULTY

All faculty engaged in graduate education need to be approved as graduate faculty before engaging in teaching, advising, supervising and/or mentoring graduate students. The policies and graduate faculty application forms can be found at gvsu.edu/gs/gradfaculty.

The following is not intended to be an exhaustive list of responsibilities, but encompasses the role most graduate faculty members fill in relation to their respective graduate programs:

1.4.1 Primary Duties of the Graduate Faculty

Program support

- Carry out all graduate program operations in compliance with university graduate education policies and regulations and stay apprised of updates or changes of these policies and procedures.

- Review the current University, Graduate School, and Unit/Program policies, procedures, requirements, standards, and new developments and/or information pertaining to all aspects of graduate programs in their department/area and regularly communicate information to graduate students.

- Serves as an advisor to assist potential graduate students with program information and meet with new students to determine course selections and planned programs of study.

- Facilitate curriculum/program changes and coordinate the periodic review of graduate curriculum, including supporting the program in university and special accreditation efforts.

- Collaborate with the unit head and colleagues to support graduate program quality through assessment, accreditation, evaluation of student outcomes, and continuous program improvement.

- Participate in the graduate academic program review process.

- Facilitate student and faculty collaboration on research and scholarly activities.

- In some academic units, coordinate with distance learning administrators to arrange classrooms, disseminate program materials, and/or provide other administrative services.

Recruitment Support

- Coordinate recruitment and marketing activities with Admissions personnel.

- Assist with the application process, including reviewing applications and serving on admissions committees.

- As an assigned advisor, provide schedules of deadlines, counsel, and direction to students throughout their graduate program.

- Assist students with adhering to academic policies and procedures and, when applicable, advise students on degree program probation and/or suspension actions.

- Assist in the orientation and professional development of graduate students within their graduate program.

- Monitor student academic progress and performance, including timely progress towards degree, approval of program plans of study, and coordination of the culminating experience.

- Other duties as assigned, such as: equipment requests, supervision of Graduate Assistants, and promoting the graduate program (through university and community activities).

1.4.2 **Primary Duties of the Graduate Program Director**

Program support

- Serves as the primary liaison between the academic program and The Graduate School.

- When applicable, oversees graduate assistantships, scholarships, tuition waivers, and fellowships, including providing information and participating in allocation processes.
- Develops and administers graduate program academic policies (e.g., probation, suspension) in collaboration with program faculty.
- Ensures compliance with university policies and regulations related to graduate education and supports their implementation.
- Communicates current policies, procedures, requirements, and updates from the University, Graduate School, and department/unit to faculty and graduate students.
- Coordinates curriculum changes and scheduled reviews, including support for university and specialized accreditation.
- Collaborates with academic unit heads, faculty, and administrators to maintain program quality through assessment activities related to student learning outcomes, graduation rates, placements, and accreditation.
- Provides conflict resolution support when needed.
- Assists with recruiting, mentoring, and evaluating graduate program adjunct faculty (where applicable).
- Participates in graduate program course scheduling (where applicable).
- Supports graduate student orientation and professional development at the program level.
- Monitors student progress, including review and approval of Program Plans of Study and coordination of culminating experiences.
- Encourages faculty-student collaboration on research and scholarly/creative activities.
- Compiles and analyzes graduate program data for internal and external reports, including surveys and institutional reviews.
- Coordinates GVSU's regularly scheduled graduate academic program review processes in collaboration with the Graduate School and the Graduate Council.
- Performs additional duties as assigned, such as managing budgets, equipment requests, supervising Graduate Assistants and support staff, and promoting the program through outreach activities.

1.4.3   Recruitment and Admissions Support

- Collaborates with recruitment and marketing personnel to support graduate student enrollment efforts.

- Manages the graduate admissions process, including application evaluations via the Slate system.
- Serves as an initial advisor to prospective and new students, offering guidance on program requirements, course selection, deadlines, and general support during the transition into graduate study

2 GRADUATE RECRUITMENT

Chapter 2 is designed to introduce you to some of the graduate recruitment resources at GVSU, including the Admissions and Recruitment Office, University Marketing, and Alumni Relations. This chapter also outlines some recruitment strategies that may be incorporated within your graduate program and the Graduate Recruitment Plan through Slate and Banner.

2.1 ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT OFFICE

The Allendale Campus Admissions and Recruitment Office is in 150 STU in the Lubbers Student Services Building and the Grand Rapids Campus Admissions and Recruitment Office is located at 102B in the Richard M. DeVos Center. Both locations are staffed to ensure the hours of operation are sufficient to meet the needs of our prospective graduate students. The Admissions and Recruitment Office can also be contacted at gradadm@gvsu.edu.

The Admissions and Recruitment Office staff participate in various events that support graduate student recruitment efforts at GVSU, including, but not limited to:

2.1.1 GRADUATE SCHOOL RECRUITING EVENTS

GVSU Admissions and Recruitment Office typically participates in various graduate school recruiting events each year. GVSU also hosts its own Graduate School Fair. This event is typically held in October at the Allendale campus and is coordinated by the University Career Center.

2.1.2 GRAND RAPIDS AREA HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK (GRAHEN)

GVSU is a current member of the Grand Rapids Area Higher Education Network (GRAHEN). GRAHEN is a nonprofit consortium composed of 12 local institutions of higher education that have degree-granting programs for adults. GRAHEN is based in Grand Rapids and has been serving area corporations at no cost since 1997.

The mission of GRAHEN is to promote an awareness of lifelong learning opportunities for adults at colleges and universities in the greater Grand Rapids area. The GRAHEN schools work collaboratively to promote lifelong learning in the West Michigan area, foster discussion of issues in higher education, and encourage employers to support employee professional development through educational fairs.

Through corporate sponsorships and educational fairs, GRAHEN offers employers and employees convenient on-site access to the schools in the area that have programs for adults. GVSU Admissions

staff visit numerous businesses and organizations in the Grand Rapids area, such as: Blue Care Network, Blue Cross Blue Shield, City of Grand Rapids, Haworth Inc., John Ball Park Zoo, University of Michigan Health-West, Corewell Health Young Professionals, and Wolverine Worldwide, Inc.

If you are interested in attending these events, please contact the GVSU Graduate Admissions and Recruitment Office: gradadm@gvsu.edu.

2.1.3 Prospective Student Visit Opportunities

The Admissions and Recruitment Office hosts individual appointments, phone appointments, and virtual information sessions/appointments for prospective graduate students. If your graduate program is interested in co-hosting an online information session, please contact the GVSU Graduate Admissions and Recruitment Office: gradadm@gvsu.edu.. Students can register online for these events via The Graduate Campus Visit page.

2.2 UNIVERSITY MARKETING

University Marketing (UMARK) provides tools for academic departments to market their graduate programs to prospective students. These tools help to convey a clear, consistent, data and research-based message about what Grand Valley (and specific graduate programs) can offer. Each academic college also employs marketing personnel who support program marketing. Contact your academic Dean's office to learn more about marketing support for graduate programs within your college.

2.2.1 Branding and Identity Standards

GVSU's brand is a promise to our audiences about who we are and what we offer. Guidelines for Grand Valley logo usage, word usage, and standards guide are found at gvsu.edu/identity. The brand is based on the university's mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities. New stories are also added continually to https://www.gvsu.edu/gvnext/.

2.2.2 Publications and Advertising

UMARK designs and produces university publications and advertising, including recruitment materials, brochures, posters, and digital ads. Academic units cover ad placement costs for their graduate programs. All materials must direct to gvsu.edu or unit websites and be submitted to UMARK for review before printing and/or posting.

2.2.3 Website Design and Development

UMARK designs and develops the primary website of the university. A content management system (CMS) allows departments to easily maintain their websites. The web team in UMARK creates a customized look for academic unit websites that complies with GVSU's web standards (available online at gvsu.edu/identity under Web). UMARK also houses and maintains the online catalog (www.gvsu.edu/catalog) and search-engine-optimized academic program pages for the university. Every program at GVSU has one of these pages. These pages were developed for each graduate program and created to answer the needs of prospective students. These pages are linked from

https://www.gvsu.edu/gs/graduate-degree-programs-and-certificates-9.htm and you can also find them at www.gvsu.edu/acadprograms.

2.3   GRADUATE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Graduate enrollment management is a shared responsibility, particularly among the academic Deans, school and unit heads, Graduate Program Directors, and The Graduate School. Graduate faculty members also play an integral role in recruitment, admissions, and retention efforts for all graduate students. All graduate programs at GVSU are required to have their own recruitment strategies and this is generally the role of the Graduate Program Director or a graduate program Admissions Committee, appropriate for their particular program(s). Some examples include:

- Collaborate with University Marketing in creating and/or revising marketing tools for your program (i.e., online, brochures, fliers).

- Identify 'feeder' schools for your graduate program; consider developing formal partnerships with these institutions to create pathways for students.

- Send mailings that target relevant employers.

- Attend events/fairs that are specific to your program's industry/profession.

- Connect to national feeder sites for your program(s) (e.g., Professional Science Masters site, professional sites).

- Maintain the graduate program website, brochures, and communications and keep information current.

- Involve GVSU alumni in your recruitment efforts.

- Respond promptly to student inquiries about program admissions and degree requirements.

- Engage program faculty interact with prospective applicants.

3   INQUIRIES, APPLICATIONS, AND ADMISSIONS DECISIONS

Chapter 3 is an introduction to the graduate education admission process at GVSU and your role as a graduate faculty member. We have also included information about The Graduate School and resources offered to help graduate programs grow.

3.1   HANDLING INQUIRIES

The inquiry process is a very important stage in the recruitment process. At this point, prospective students may be considering many different schools and/or options for graduate study. Therefore, the communication we have with them is critical. **It is important for students to have direct contact with a faculty member during the recruitment and application process. Having a faculty contact**

who can answer admissions-related questions may help students decide to attend GVSU. Please be sure as a graduate faculty member, you are responsive to student inquiries. Prospective students who receive personalized contact from faculty members are far more likely to apply and accept admission to GVSU.

3.1.1   Graduate Applications

Students can complete a GVSU graduate application online at https://www.gvsu.edu/admissions/graduate-application-24.htm. We strongly encourage students to apply online.

Please note that the paper graduate application is updated and reprinted only once a year, typically in July. Changes to the online graduate application may be made throughout the year, as appropriate. If changes have been made to your program's graduate application requirements, you may want to advise students to complete an online application rather than a paper application.

3.2   GRADUATE ADMISSION

Applicants for graduate admission must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered:

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university in the United States, or the equivalent of this degree from another country.

- Demonstrated ability to pursue graduate work successfully. Graduate programs generally require an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0.

Graduate admission requirements are minimum requirements for consideration and do not guarantee acceptance into a specific program. Graduate programs also have additional requirements for admission. All graduate students at Grand Valley State University are classified as either degree seeking or non-degree seeking.

3.2.1   Admissions and Recruitment Office Role

Representatives from the Admissions and Recruitment Office assist with international recruitment, as they travel to various locations to recruit students. Recent recruitment trips have gone to Eurasia, Asia, Africa, India, and Latin America. They have several online marketing programs they use to attract students from around the world. GVSU also utilizes international recruiting agents who regularly visit GVSU, and you may be invited to meet with them either individually or in a group. **Each academic year, GVSU is host to nearly 400 international students from over 70 countries.**

For international students, the Admissions and Recruitment Office offers but does not require evaluation of transcripts. Evaluation includes converting their GPA into the US scale. The Admissions and Recruitment Office does not determine how classes transfer. However, the student will provide course descriptions and that information will be sent to the graduate programs for review. The graduate program will determine how much credit to award. The Graduate School also provides a list of transcript evaluation services online at gvsu.edu/gs/international-students.

3.3   APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

When a prospective student applies for graduate admission at Grand Valley, the application is considered incomplete until all the necessary documents are submitted to the Admissions and Recruitment Office. Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) have access to an incomplete queue where incomplete applications can be viewed. GPDs are encouraged to contact students and urge them to complete their applications. Only prospective students who submit a complete application can be considered for full admission. Other types of admission decisions are detailed below.

Once the Admissions and Recruitment Office receives all materials, the application becomes complete, and the graduate program is responsible for reviewing it and making an admissions decision. GPDs can request that an email notification be sent to them each time a graduate application becomes complete and is ready for review by contacting the GVSU Graduate Admissions and Recruitment Office at gradadm@gvsu.edu.

If your graduate program uses rolling admissions, we ask that graduate programs decide on a student's file within two weeks of receiving the complete application materials. This allows students to hear back in a timely manner, and they may be more likely to enroll in the university.

Slate is the software that GVSU uses to electronically review and make decisions on admission applications. Training is available to each graduate program on how to use the software and how to assign graduate advisors to students, if applicable. If you need access to Slate, please contact the GVSU Graduate Admissions and Recruitment Office at gradadm@gvsu.edu. A Graduate Slate Training Manual is also available online at gvsu.edu/registrar.

3.4   ADMISSIONS DECISIONS

A **degree-seeking graduate student** is an applicant who has been granted admission to a degree program under **full**, **provisional**, or **conditional** status. For more information about graduate academic admissions, refer to GVSU's 2025-2026 Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog and the Graduate School's *2025-2026 Graduate Education Policies and Procedures Manual*.

4 ADMITTED STUDENT PROCESSES

The processes outlined in this chapter cover the responsibilities of graduate faculty members after students are admitted to Grand Valley State University. This includes orientation, advising and degree completion tools, university and graduate policies, student code and conduct policies, financial aid, and graduate assistantships and student workers.

4.1 NEW GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION

The Graduate School works with the Admissions and Recruitment Office to provide a university-wide New Graduate Student Orientation before the start of each semester. Each newly admitted student is invited and expected to attend this orientation, in person or virtually. The Graduate Program Director may coordinate a program-specific orientation to correspond with the university-wide orientation.

An International Graduate Student Orientation is also available through the Padnos International Center (PIC), which is coordinated with New Graduate Student Orientation.

4.2 ADVISING

The key to graduate student success is program-specific advising from a faculty advisor engaged in graduate education or the Graduate Program Director. Creating a realistic and achievable plan of study is critical to graduate student retention and success. Faculty engaged in graduate education need to hold graduate faculty status and should be trained before advising graduate students.

4.3 DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND MYPATH FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The Graduate Program Director, in partnership with graduate program faculty, should establish procedures for monitoring graduate student progress toward the degree, including:

- Accurate record keeping.

- Creation of a plan of study.

- Controls for special program-specific requirements.

- Communication with students regarding degree requirements.

- Updates in MyPath reflecting changes in program requirements.

- Establishing relationships with staff in offices administering various university-wide policies related to graduate programs or graduate students.

- Monitoring graduate student program outcomes and graduate program assessment reports.

- Preparing program change requests and curriculum revisions and additions.

4.4   TRANSFER COURSEWORK

For graduate students, transfer coursework (if allowed) is evaluated at the graduate program level. It is the responsibility of the graduate faculty advisor and the Graduate Program Director to evaluate courses for transfer to GVSU from other institutions. The Graduate Program Director should also provide oversight for the courses being accepted for transfer into the graduate degree program(s).

In evaluating transfer course work, it should be determined if the courses in question are an appropriate substitute for the required courses in the program. Program curricula are subject to a rigorous review through the university curriculum review process and courses should not be substituted unless thoroughly evaluated and approved.

More information regarding transfer coursework can be found in the *Graduate Education Policies & Procedures Manual* available at gvsu.edu/gs/manual.

4.5   ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Graduate students must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher in the entire degree program to graduate. To count for the degree, graduate classes must also have an earned grade of "C" or better. If a graduate student does not maintain good academic standing, the academic review process may be initiated and will be conducted by the appropriate graduate program director for degree-seeking graduate students or by The Graduate School for non-degree seeking graduate students. The Academic Review policy and review criteria are available in the *Graduate Education Policies & Procedures Manual* at gvsu.edu/gs/manual.

Graduate Programs may opt to place more stringent requirements on students, such as additional GPA requirements for specific coursework. Graduate student progress can be reviewed in MyPath. The Office of the Registrar has implemented MyPath for graduate students, which utilizes Banner to track graduate student degree progress and planned programs. Faculty can access MyPath by logging into Banner.

Following an academic dismissal of a student, Graduate Program Directors may need to review appeals in partnership with the Dean's office. Students must obtain letters of support from a faculty advisor or mentor in their graduate program. Students must also, with the assistance of an advisor, create a plan of study to effectively raise their grade point average to 3.0 (including repeating courses with less than satisfactory grades). Students are not guaranteed re-admission into the graduate program from which they were dismissed.

4.6   PETITIONS FOR EXCEPTION

4.6.1   Academic Policy Exceptions

The Graduate School reviews and processes all petitions for exceptions to university graduate policies. Students seeking to appeal graduate academic policies must complete the appropriate form provided in the Forms Library on the Graduate School website (gvsu.edu/gs/forms). Depending on the request, the student's academic advisor, graduate program director, unit head, and/or Dean of the academic college in which the graduate program resides must provide a decision before the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School reviews and provides a final decision.

The academic policies for graduate students are all listed in the *Graduate Education Policies and Procedures Manual*, available online at gvsu.edu/gs/policies-and-procedures-58.htm.

4.6.2   Credit Overload Limit

In most circumstances, students should not be advised to enroll in more than 9 credit hours as a full-time student. However, graduate students may register for up to 15 credit hours per semester. Permission from the Dean of the appropriate academic college is required to register for more than 15 hours per semester.

4.6.3   Graduate Course and Program Withdrawal Requests

After the ninth week of the semester, a degree seeking graduate student may only withdraw from one or more courses, and receive a grade of "W," with the approval of the course instructor, the director of the graduate program in which they are enrolled, and the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School. The Graduate Course Late Withdrawal form is available at gvsu.edu/gs/forms.

A graduate student may elect to withdraw from a graduate program. A graduate student who has been granted a program withdrawal shall normally receive a "W" for the current semester courses, be classified by Grand Valley as a non-degree seeking student and must reapply for admission to the graduate program if they desire to return. If the student wishes to apply to a different graduate program, the student must meet all admission requirements for the new program. Each graduate program has a formal process by which a student can request a withdrawal from the graduate program.

4.6.4   Leave of Absence

Graduate students may request a Leave of Absence for up to two years by submitting a form (available at gvsu.edu/gs/forms) with a brief letter explaining the reason and planned return date. The request requires support from the Graduate Program Director and faculty advisor and is reviewed by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School. All parties are notified of the decision.

Students in non-cohort or unstructured programs who plan to take just one semester off may not need to file a request and should first consult their Graduate Program Director. Full policy details are

in the *Graduate Education Policies and Procedures Manual*, available online at gvsu.edu/gs/policies-and-procedures-58.htm.

4.6.5   **Petition to Return**

Graduate students are subject to life events or factors that may cause them to delay progress or step out of their degree program temporarily. Such breaks in their enrollment should be noted on their plan of study to assist their advising when they re-engage their graduate studies.

After two full semesters of inactivity, the Office of the Registrar will place a "Re-entry" hold on the records of students who have not registered or attended classes. Students must contact the Office of the Registrar to have this hold removed prior to returning to graduate study.

The Petition to Return Form can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website (gvsu.edu/registrar) under the "Forms Library." This form is used by students returning to graduate study after a period of inactivity and by students seeking permission to return to graduate study following an academic dismissal.

4.6.6   **Professional Learning Credits**

To fulfill required or elective courses in their degree planned program, graduate students can earn graduate credits for professional learning acquired through non-credit courses, industry recognized credentials, structured non-credit professional development programs, and/or professional work experiences. Credits for professional learning will count toward graduation but will not be used in computing the student's grade point average. Professional learning credits may not be used for a culminating experience and may not exceed 20% of the student's degree program credit hours.

Further details regarding the professional learning credit processes are available in the *Graduate Education Policies & Procedures Manual*, available online at gvsu.edu/gs/policies-and-procedures-58.htm.

4.7   GRADUATION AUDIT PROCEDURE AND MYPATH

Graduate students should apply for graduation one semester prior to the semester they intend to graduate, via the application form on the Office of Registrar webpage at gvsu.edu/registrar/student-forms. If the audit comes back from the graduate program with issues that will prevent graduation, the auditor will send an audit review letter to the student, which states what requirements remain that make the student ineligible to graduate at the end of the semester. For more information, email regdept@gvsu.edu.

4.8   FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (BUCKLEY AMENDMENT)

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was enacted in 1974 and updated on January 8, 2009. FERPA is intended to protect a student's educational record.

It is not necessary to understand every nuance of the law and its administration, but it is important to understand that FERPA exists and governs much of what we do in higher education. FERPA is everyone's responsibility, as any employee at GVSU can expose the institution to FERPA liability if that individual has access to student records. Almost all student records are subject to FERPA, not just academic records.

University Counsel and the Office of the Registrar have provided guidelines regarding FERPA. As a faculty or staff member, you have a legal responsibility under FERPA to protect the confidentiality of student education records in your possession.

- Securely store confidential information and do not leave confidential information displayed or accessible on an unattended computer.

- Shred or properly dispose of all student records that no longer need to be retained (such as tests, papers, class rosters).

- Contact the Office of the Registrar if you have any questions about the release of student records.

4.9 STUDENT CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

4.9.1 Student Code

All graduate students are subject to the Student Code as published by the Dean of Students Office. This includes Student Conduct, Rules and Regulations, Judicial Process, and Student Grievance Procedures. The Student Code can be found at gvsu.edu/student code.

4.9.2 Student Handbooks

Each graduate program should have a program-specific Student Handbook to clarify the program's expectations for students. A Student Handbook should address the graduate program's vision, mission, and core values, and clearly outline the expectations for student conduct and quality of work. It may also outline the degree requirements and include samples of the program of study (e.g., full-time and part-time, if applicable). If the program has enacted policies that hold graduate students to a different standard than university requirements, those exceptions must be clearly defined in the graduate program's Student Handbook.

Each graduate program Student Handbook should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it encompasses all policies and expectations for students. Student Handbooks are reviewed by the Graduate Council on a regular basis for consistency with university policy. For a detailed outline of a program-specific Student Handbook, please see Appendix C.

4.9.3 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

GVSU expects that all faculty and students will honor the principles of academic honesty as outlined in the Student Code and the Faculty Handbook.

All suspected incidents of academic dishonesty or plagiarism may be reported to the Dean of Students Office. Graduate Program Directors may choose to handle such incidents within their program by meeting with the graduate student and faculty member. If an academic honesty issue is handled internally, there is no university record of the proceeding, and the student may not be subject to the consequences of Judicial Review. Only those suspected incidents of academic dishonesty or plagiarism reported to the Dean of Students Office are eligible for Conduct Review.

4.9.4 Artificial Intelligence use in a Research Project, Thesis, or Dissertation Policy

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a fast evolving and readily available tool for use in the educational process and curriculum, and knowing how and when to appropriately use AI is an emerging skill. For more information about AI policies and graduate education, refer to GVSU's 2025-2026 Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog and the Graduate School's *2025-2026 Graduate Education Policies and Procedures Manual*.

4.10 GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate Assistantships serve a dual purpose: (1) they provide graduate students with part-time, paid work experiences in their field of study, and allow them to expand and/or apply their discipline knowledge and skills under supervision; and (2) they provide GVSU faculty and/or university staff assistance in carrying out special projects or other assignments that require the advanced skills of graduate students. The activities assigned are to have educational value for the student. Graduate assistantships are not to be used in lieu of hiring student employees for clerical and office support. To hold a GA position, graduate students must be in and remain in good academic standing (i.e., cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher) throughout the appointment.

Departments planning to hire GAs for the Spring/Summer semester must request approval from The Graduate School prior to hiring. This is to ensure that Provost/Financial Aid tuition funds are available to cover the GA's tuition waiver. Requests for approval should be submitted via email to The Graduate School at gradschool@gvsu.edu.

To qualify for a GA position at GVSU, the student must be:

1. Admitted as a degree-seeking student in a Grand Valley graduate program at the time of appointment. *Students with conditional, provisional, or non-degree admission status are not eligible for a graduate assistantship.*
2. Enrolled in the minimum number of credit hours for a half-time or full-time position. If a student drops below the minimum hours required for the assistantship or withdraws from the program, they may forfeit the tuition waiver and may not be able to continue work for that semester. Students enrolled in only the continuation credit for projects/theses (696/796) are not eligible for an assistantship.
3. In good academic standing, with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better prior to and throughout the duration of the appointment. A graduate student on academic probation or in jeopardy of dismissal may not hold a GA position.

4.10.1   Types of Graduate Assistantships

Full-time Assistantship (Standard): includes a 20-hour per week work assignment for each semester, corresponding to the beginning and ending dates of the semester as published in the academic calendar. Compensation includes 1) a stipend of $6,500 per semester, and 2) tuition credit (aka "waiver") for 9 graduate credits per fall/winter semesters.

Full-time Assistantship (Extended): includes a 20-hour per week work assignment for each semester, typically beginning two weeks before the beginning of fall semester and ending two weeks after the end of the winter semester. Compensation includes 1) a stipend of $7,000 per semester (fall/winter), 2) tuition credit for 9 graduate credits per fall/winter semesters and 3) tuition credit for 3 graduate credits in the spring/summer semester.

Full-time Assistantship (Full-Year): includes a 20-hour per week work assignment for each semester, corresponding to the beginning of the fall semester and ending the last day of the following spring/summer semester as published in the academic calendar. Compensation includes 1) a stipend of $6,500 per semester, 2) tuition credit for 9 graduate credits per fall/winter semesters and 3) tuition credit for 6 graduate credits in the spring/summer semester.

Half-time Assistantship: includes a 10-hour per week work assignment for each semester, corresponding to the beginning and ending dates of the semester as published in the academic calendar. Compensation includes 1) a stipend of $3,250 per semester, and 2) tuition credit for 4.5 graduate credits per fall/winter semesters.

4.10.2   Graduate Assistantship Stipend Funding

Stipends
Graduate assistantship stipends are funded four ways: 1) general fund base-budget by the college, department, or unit 2) externally funded by a grant or contract, 3) internally funded by the college, department, or unit, or 4) special projects funding from The Graduate School.

1. The number of positions allocated to a department/unit within Academic Affairs is determined by the Office of the Provost. Requests for increases to a unit's GA allocation should be made to the Academic College at the time the college's annual budget request is being developed for the next fiscal year. This typically occurs during the month of October. The tuition waiver comes from Financial Aid and the stipend comes from the base budget and is transferred to the hiring unit's Student Wages Allocation.

2. For grant-funded assistantships the grant writer/Principle Investigator should make every effort to obtain funding for the tuition waiver and stipend from the funding source. If the funding source does not provide tuition support, in partnership with the Office of Sponsored Programs the PI must gain approval from the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School prior to the grant submission for the tuition to be paid by GVSU and count that tuition support as a financial match in the grant budget. Such requests for a tuition match must be coordinated with the Office of Sponsored Programs and The Graduate School.

3. Special Projects graduate assistantships are allocated by The Graduate School exclusively for the purpose of meeting the temporary needs of departments with academic, student- or service-oriented projects that advance the university's vision and mission.

Tuition

Tuition credit (aka "waiver") is one of the primary benefits of a graduate assistantship. As indicated above, a graduate assistant receives a tuition waiver consistent with their appointment length and terms. Students should understand that they must pay for any credits beyond those covered by the tuition waiver. The tuition waiver does not cover undergraduate credits.

To follow the Internal Revenue Service definition of the tuition reduction exemption for graduate assistants, all job responsibilities must include a significant instructional or research component. If the graduate assistant's responsibilities are non-instructional or non-research then the tuition remission and stipend received by the student is subject to Federal, State, and Local withholding tax under I.R.C. § 117(d).

4.10.3 Recruiting, Hiring, and Terminating Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistant position descriptions must be submitted to, and approved by, the Graduate School every academic year. Graduate assistant contracts cannot be processed without an updated approved GA position description on file in the Graduate School. All GA positions must be posted in Workday, and all GAs must be hired through Workday.

Departments are responsible for advertising, interviewing, and hiring their GAs. The Graduate School is not involved in this part of the GA appointment process except to offer guidance and assistance as needed.

GA Job Description

Complete instructions and template for writing a graduate assistant job description may be found on The Graduate School website. GA job responsibilities must include a significant instructional or research component for the tuition waiver to be tax-exempt. Positions that are primarily administrative are classified as "other," thus the tuition waiver is considered taxable income. All GA job descriptions must be submitted annually for review to The Graduate School, at which time the position will be reviewed and classified "other" (taxable) or research and/or instructional (tax-exempt).

Screening Candidates

The hiring department should screen each strong candidate to ensure the student is eligible for a graduate assistantship.

Hiring

Upon making an offer to the selected candidate, the hiring department hires a GA in Workday. The completed form is reviewed and approved by The Graduate School and submitted to Student Employment. Tuition waiver information must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval and submission to Financial Aid.

Graduate assistants are responsible for completing the appropriate forms (W-4 and I-9) in Workday. GAs will receive a notification in Workday if they need to complete the forms.

Cancellation and Termination

Unforeseen circumstances may occur that require an appointment to be discontinued. When this happens, the hiring department must notify The Graduate School via email, provide the GA's name and G-number, the reason for cancellation, and the effective date of the cancellation. The Graduate School will notify Student Employment and Financial Aid so that the stipend will be discontinued, and the tuition will be pro-rated according to the length of time the student held the GA position.

If there are issues with the GA's job performance, the hiring department must first develop a performance improvement plan for the GA and provide a timeline for implementation of the plan and evaluation of the GA's performance. If the GA's performance remains unsatisfactory, the hiring department must first notify The Graduate School, then notify the student of the termination in writing via email or letter and provide a copy of the termination notice to The Graduate School for their records.

Replacement

If a GA opening is created due to a student's departure, the hiring department may replace the GA at any time during the semester, if approved by the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School. The replacement GA will receive a pro-rated stipend and tuition waiver.

4.11 HOURLY STUDENT WORKERS

Units may hire graduate students as hourly student employees. These positions are not considered graduate assistantships. The primary attributes of a graduate assistantship (stipend, tuition waiver, parking permit fee waiver, and academic enhancement) are not the same as those of an hourly student worker position. The student worker receives a bi-weekly paycheck based on the number of hours worked, not a set amount as a graduate assistantship stipend would pay. Hourly student workers do not receive a tuition waiver.

Student worker positions may be advertised in Workday. Preference for graduate student applicants should be noted in the description. Units are responsible for their own recruiting, interviewing, and hiring. The Graduate School is not involved in this process except to offer advice and guidance, if needed.

5 RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP & STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This chapter covers student research and development, including protocols for student research, applying for funding, graduate student life, as well as ways to recognize outstanding graduate students in your program. Also included is an extensive list of resources on campus to assist students with academic and personal needs during their graduate study.

5.1 Student Research

All graduate students conducting research and scholarship are expected to understand and comply with the rules and responsibilities for their respective discipline including the protection of human and animal subjects in research, if applicable. **Graduate students are required to complete RCR training prior to engaging in any research activities and prior to completion of 50% of their graduate program.** A full listing of RCR requirements by graduate programs is available at gvsu.edu/gs/responsible-conduct-of-research-requirements

5.1.1 Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence

The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence (CSCE) promotes a culture of active scholarship, encourages innovation and enterprise, facilitates collaborations, and serves as an advocate for university scholarship and creative practice. The CSCE sponsors workshops, colloquia, lectures, and discussions. It provides help with developing a scholarly agenda, mentoring by senior faculty, assistance in finding collaborations, and publishing as a scholar. In addition, the CSCE provides funding to help support faculty and faculty-mentored scholarship. Guidelines and forms for all grants are available on the CSCE homepage at gvsu.edu/csce.

5.1.2 Office of Research Compliance and Integrity

The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity (ORCI) has a mission to ensure the safe, ethical conduct of human, animal, and laboratory research compliant with university policy and regulatory requirements.

Graduate students wishing to conduct research with human or animal subjects, radioactive materials or radiation producing equipment, chemicals, biologics, and other hazardous materials are subject to the training, review, and oversight provided by the committees and officers within the ORCI.

Graduate faculty and graduate students are required to adhere to all GVSU policies regarding research, including research misconduct and research integrity. See ORCI's website for more information at https://www.gvsu.edu/rci/.

5.2 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AND RECOGNITION

5.2.1 Graduate Academic Conference Fund (G-ACF)

Small amounts of funding are available for graduate student travel through The Graduate School. The Graduate Academic Conference Fund (ACF) is available to support graduate students who have been invited to present or perform at a conference or professional meeting. To qualify for G-ACF funding, a graduate student must be identified as the primary presenter (first person named) on the proof of acceptance. Graduate students may apply for travel grants up to $600 for conference presenters (up to $800 for international travel). The purpose of these grants is to encourage student presentations at academic conferences by offsetting the cost of travel and attendance. Graduate students may receive funding through the G-ACF once during their graduate academic career at GVSU.

The G- ACF grant funds are awarded four times per year: July-September, October-December, January-March, and April-June. Grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis each quarter until the funds for that quarter are exhausted. Each application is reviewed by The Graduate School personnel.

For more information, visit gvsu.edu/gs/academic-conference-fund.

5.2.2 Presidential Research Grants (PRG)

Presidential Research Grants are available to graduate students and intended as a one-time award during a graduate student's academic career at GVSU. Presidential Research Grant recipients must be degree-seeking and the research must be tied to completion of some aspect of their graduate degree program. Grant awards for full grants of up to $1,500 and for small grants of up to $500 are available to support graduate student research projects. Application forms, instructions, and deadlines are available online at gvsu.edu/gs/presidential-research-grants.

5.2.3 Graduate Student Showcase

In April of each year, The Graduate School and The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence co-sponsor the annual Graduate Student Showcase event. Graduate Program Directors nominate outstanding students and recent alumni to present their research or scholarly activities. More event details are available at gvsu.edu/gradshowcase.

5.2.4 Graduate School Citation Awards for Academic Excellence

The Graduate School, in partnership with the Graduate Student Association, presents awards at the end of the Fall and Winter semesters to outstanding students. Students can receive awards based on academic performance, outstanding dissertation, thesis, or final project, outstanding publication, service to the community or profession, service, or leadership at GVSU, promoting diversity and inclusion at GVSU, or excellence in sustainability.

The Graduate Program Directors facilitate nominations for the Graduate School Citation Awards for Academic Excellence. Faculty members may nominate outstanding students, though only one

student per program may be nominated for each award. The GSA also recognizes outstanding faculty members at the ceremony in the categories of inclusion, mentorship, and teaching.

5.3 PROJECT, THESIS, AND DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

Graduate Program Directors and faculty are strongly encouraged to support and mentor the submission of graduate student scholarship for dissemination when student work merits the opportunity.

Graduate program policies and procedures regarding the successful proposal and preparation of a project, thesis, or dissertation should be clearly communicated to students at the time of program entry and reinforced through routine advising, well in advance of the program's conclusion. The Graduate School publishes the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations*. These guidelines, which have been approved by the Graduate Council, along with supporting electronic forms, are available online at https://www.gvsu.edu/gs/thesis-and-dissertation-information-35.htm.

The Graduate School also publishes the Guidelines for the Preparation of Projects used as Culminating Experiences along with example forms and resources at https://www.gvsu.edu/gs/project-guidelines-104.htm.

Students are required to deposit their final thesis or dissertation in ScholarWorks@GVSU (scholarworks.gvsu.edu), the digital repository for scholarship at GVSU.

5.3.1 ScholarWorks@GVSU

ScholarWorks@GVSU is an open-access repository maintained by the GVSU Libraries that showcases and shares the scholarly and creative work of GVSU faculty, staff, and students. Authors contributing work to ScholarWorks@GVSU retain all copyrights to their scholarship and can continue to publish and build upon the work they have shared. For more information contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

The Graduate School mandates the deposit of theses and dissertations in ScholarWorks@GVSU, but the repository is also available to share and showcase other GVSU content, including exceptional graduate student work, faculty publications, data sets, and more.

If a graduate student's thesis or dissertation involves research which could lead to a patent, includes sensitive or confidential information, or may be submitted for publication, please reach out to The Graduate School to request an exemption from including the student work from ScholarWorks@GVSU by completing a Petition for Exception Form. All exemptions require the approval of the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.

6   GRADUATE STUDENT RESOURCES

This chapter covers graduate student resources, including centers on campus to assist with library research, writing, and career goals. Also included is an extensive list of resources on campus to support graduate students' academic and personal needs during their graduate studies.

6.1   Graduate Student Services

6.1.1   Career Center Services for Graduate Students

The Career Center has staff dedicated to supporting graduate students at any point in their graduate careers. All services are free to GVSU graduate students and alumni and may be accessed by visiting www.gvsu.edu/careers/.

6.1.2   Knowledge Market

The Knowledge Market is a collaborative service that brings together multiple peer consulting services to assist students with research, writing, digital skills, and presentations. If students wish to schedule an appointment or learn additional details about services, hours, and locations, they can visit the Knowledge Market Website.

6.1.3   Resource Market

The Knowledge Market is a collaborative service that brings together multiple peer consulting services to assist students with research, writing, digital skills, and presentations. If students wish to schedule an appointment or learn additional details about services, hours, and locations, they can visit the Knowledge Market Website.

All services are free to GVSU graduate students. For additional information, contact the University Libraries at (616) 331-3500 or by visiting www.gvsu.edu/library/.

6.1.4   The Speech Lab

The Grand Valley Speech Lab is a student service aimed at empowering speakers across the campus community. The lab assists with creating and evaluating oral presentation assignments, collaboration on conference presentations, structuring dissertation defenses, and a wide variety of in-class or pre-recorded workshops on a range of topics. Additionally, sending students to the Lab prior to in-class presentations is likely to result in more prepared and polished student presentations. For more information visit the Speech Lab website: gvsu.edu/speechlab

6.1.5   Writing Center

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing and Michigan Authors employs more than 60 undergraduate student and graduate student writing consultants from across the disciplines. If the assistance of a

graduate writing consultant is necessary, students should contact the Writing Center. For additional details and current information, please visit the Writing Center website: gvsu.edu/wc

6.1.6   Veterans Network and Student Veteran Awareness Training

The Peter Secchia Military and Veterans Resource Center at GVSU provides support for veterans, active service members, and their families. Visit the Veterans Network website to learn more at gvsu.edu/veterans.

6.2   UNIVERSITY SOCIAL JUSTICE CENTERS AND ADVOCACY RESOURCES

The GVSU campus community has a wide variety of resources available to students. Departmental representatives, who are based in Allendale, are frequently able to meet with students on another campus or virtually:

Student Accessibility Resources   (616) 331-2490
gvsu.edu/dsr

Inclusion and Equity   (616) 331-3296
gvsu.edu/inclusion

Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center   (616) 331-2530
gvsu.edu/lgbtrc

Office of Multicultural Affairs   (616) 331-2177
gvsu.edu/oma

Office of Student Life   (616) 331-2345
gvsu.edu/studentlife

Padnos International Center   (616) 331-3898
gvsu.edu/pic

**Gayle R. Davis Center for Women
and Gender Equity**   (616) 331-2748
gvsu.edu/women_cen

Student Ombuds   (616) 331-2491
gvsu.edu/ombuds/

Victim's Rights and Options   (616) 331-2742
gvsu.edu/vro/

Office of Civil Rights and Title IX   (616) 331-9530
gvsu.edu/titleix/

6.3 THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is an organization that advocates for the graduate student community. GSA oversees funding for graduate student organizations, hosts professional and academic networking events, and acts as a voice for all graduate students at GVSU. GSA hosts various social and professional development events during the academic year, to learn more visit https://www.gvsu.edu/gsa/.

6.4 GRADUATE REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Many programs now have registered student organizations that graduate students can join. Graduate Student Organizations are eligible to apply for funding support through GSA. If your program does not have a registered student organization (RSO) but would like to start one, contact a GSA member at gvsu.edu/gsa. Also review the list of current Graduate RSOs.

6.5 ALUMNI RELATIONS & GVSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Alumni Relations operates the Alumni Association to support alumni on their journeys as Lakers for a Lifetime, helping them stay informed, get involved, give back, and have Laker pride. One of the ways we accomplish this is by helping faculty and staff members connect with alumni through events, volunteer opportunities, and communications. You can visit gvsu.edu/alumni/resources-for-campus-partners for more information.