

# **STUDENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

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# STUDENT EMPLOYEE DEFINITION

A student employee is a part-time employee who is enrolled and regularly attending classes at Grand Valley State University. Their primary purpose for being at Grand Valley State University is to further their education. Therefore, student employment is interim or temporary and supplementary to the pursuit of an education. Student employees shall not work more than twenty-five (25) hours per week, twenty (20) hours for international students. A student must be enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits during the semester they wish to be employed. To work on campus during the spring/summer semester, students must be enrolled in at least 6 credits during the current spring/summer semester or following fall semester.

# I-9 DOCUMENTS AND OTHER FORMS

## Federal I-9 Form

The I-9 Form is a federally required document that verifies your eligibility to work in the U.S. IT MUST BE COMPLETED ON OR BEFORE YOUR FIRST DAY OF EMPLOYMENT. If you have worked on campus before, your supervisor may call Student Employment to verify that you have a valid I-9 Form on file. An I-9 Form expires after 1 year of no employment on campus. The Student Employment Office or your employer will need to see and verify original identification documents. There is a list of acceptable documents included with the I-9 Form PDF on our website at [www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs](http://www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs) within the “Forms” tab.

## Income Tax Withholding Forms (W-4)

Student Employees at GVSU are required to pay taxes on their earnings. In order specify how they would like their taxes to be taken out, students will need to fill out the Federal W-4, State W-4, and City tax forms (where applicable). W-4 forms must be turned into the Payroll Office in Zumberge Hall. They can also be completed at Student Employment and will be sent to the Payroll Office.

**NOTE:** The address you give Payroll will be the address to which your W-2 income tax forms will be mailed. If you change your address, you must notify the Payroll Office. The W-2 forms are mailed out to each employee by January 31 of the year following the end of the tax year. Your W-2 can also be made available electronically. You will need to initially give permission. To get instructions on this, you will need to go to the GVSU Payroll website [www.gvsu.edu/payroll](http://www.gvsu.edu/payroll). On the Payroll homepage you will find instructions on receiving W-2's electronically.

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

## Recording Hours

You will be recording your hours using an electronic system called UltraTime. Depending on where you work, you will input your hours into UltraTime using a physical time clock, a punch system, or you will enter your hours manually.

- a. To use a physical time clock, you will use your student ID to swipe through the machine allowing you to clock in and out of your shift.
- b. To use the punch system, you will enter your G# and the last 4 digits of your social security number to clock in and out.
- c. For manually entry, you should enter your hours daily into UltraTime. Do not enter time before you have worked. Access UltraTime through Grand Valley's home page under "Quick Links" and "UltraTime."
- d. **Do not enter time you have not worked in UltraTime.** GVSU and the Student Employment Office will investigate if this happens and appropriate consequences will follow for the student employee.

Further questions related to UltraTime and clocking hours should be brought to the Payroll Office at [payroll@gvsu.edu](mailto:payroll@gvsu.edu) or (616) 331-2237.

## Establishing a Work Schedule

Make sure that you and your supervisor are on the same page when it comes to the hours you will be working. Provide them with your class schedule and any other commitments that will prevent you from working. Be honest about the hours you are able to work and update your supervisor if anything changes.

## Employer/Employee Relations

Keep your supervisor informed about your work progress and any other issues that may arise at work. Also, make sure you understand your supervisor's expectations by asking questions when things are not clear.

# TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

## Federal Work-Study

Federal Work-study is a form of Financial Aid provided at GVSU. In order to be eligible for Federal Work-Study, a student must demonstrate financial need, be enrolled at least half-time (at least 6 credit hours during the academic year), be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and meet other Federal/State eligibility requirements. A student must apply for financial aid through filing the FAFSA. If a student demonstrates financial need as a result of filing the FAFSA, Federal Work-Study may be awarded. Money awarded under the Federal Work-Study program is earned over the course of the academic year through employment and will never pay toward the student's tuition bill.

Students awarded Federal Work-Study must accept their financial aid award before they can work. Students awarded Federal Work-Study are not assigned to employment, but are asked to search for jobs online through our [Handshake](#) electronic job board. Each employer will have application instructions posted with their job description that the student should follow.

**NOTE:** Federal Work-Study must be applied for each year by completing the FAFSA. Federal Work-Study students are limited to maximum earnings equal to the amount of their Federal Work-Study award.

If the student earns over their Federal Work-Study award, the on-campus department will be responsible for 100% of those earnings. In some cases, a student may be terminated from their position because the department cannot afford to keep them working and pay 100% of their hourly wage. Discuss this possibility with your supervisor.

Students may work at more than one job; however, the TOTAL combined hours worked per week must not exceed the maximum (25) allowed. If the student is a Federal Work-Study student, the earnings from both jobs are deducted from their Federal Work-Study award. Therefore, it is likely the award will deplete more quickly.

## **Traditional Employment (Non-Work-Study)**

These student employees are paid 100% of their paycheck from the employing unit's budget. Regular employees may be receiving financial aid, but were not awarded Federal Work-Study as part of their award package.

Students in non-Federal Work-Study positions must be enrolled for a minimum of six credits during the academic year. They are limited to a 25-hour work week for all student positions combined. Students are allowed to work up to 40 hours per week when school is not in session (i.e. spring break, between semesters, spring/summer semester).

## **International Students**

International students are limited to a maximum of 20 hours per week of student employment during the academic year, but allowed to work up to 40 hours when classes are not in session.



## Summer Employment

A limited number of jobs are available on-campus during the Spring/Summer semester. Students must be officially admitted to attend Grand Valley. The student does not need to be enrolled in courses over the Spring/Summer semester but must be enrolled in at least 6 credits for the following fall semester. A student employee can work up to 40 hours per week during Spring/Summer semester, however, the student must cut back to 25 hours or less per week during the academic year. FICA Tax (7.65%) will be charged to the student and the department's account if the student is enrolled for less than six credits.

**NOTE:** Federal Work-Study cannot be used during the spring/summer semester.

## Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships are similar to traditional employment but they typically are related to a student's major and include other benefits. More information on Graduate Assistantships and how to apply for one can be found on the Graduate Studies website at <https://www.gvsu.edu/gs/>.

## Credit Enrollment

According to the definition of a "Student Employee," a student must be registered for a minimum of 6 credits to be eligible to be a student worker. Enrollment is checked each pay period and upon falling below the minimum credits required, a student's position will be terminated. Students who are below the credit limit and wish to continue working as a student employee on campus will need to contact the Student Employment Office to request a Student Employee Exception Form. This form allows students to explain their reasoning behind their low credit enrollment. These reasons are often based on extenuating circumstances (e.g. last semester and only need one class to finish degree, program requires less than half-time enrollment, etc.). To qualify for this exception, students must be currently enrolled in at least 1 course and pursuing a degree at Grand Valley State University.

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

## Working on Campus

Enrolled international students with a F-1 or J-1 visa may be employed on campus for a maximum of twenty (20) hours per week during the academic year. During holiday or vacation periods (spring break, winter break, summer, etc.) international students are permitted to work up to 40 hours per week.

International students must complete a Federal I-9 Form and W-4 tax forms before they can begin working on campus. More information on this process can be found on page 3. In order to complete the I-9 form, international students will need to bring in 3 identifying documents. These documents include their passport, I-20 form and I-94.

## Visas

Questions regarding employment of F-1 and J-1 international students may be addressed to the Barbara H. Padnos International Center (616-331-3898) or Student Employment (616-331-3238).

If an international student is in the process of receiving a social security card, they can still fill out the I-9 form and work on campus. However, as soon as they receive their social security card, they should come to the Student Employment office to update that information in the system.

# PAYCHECKS

Students are paid on a bi-weekly basis. A chart with pay periods and pay dates can be found on our website homepage at [www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs](http://www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs) underneath the “Quick Links” section.

Direct deposit is strongly recommended for all student employees. Direct deposit is a free service, which allows student's paychecks to be submitted directly to their bank accounts; generally, this means that funds are available earlier, since the student no longer needs to wait for the check to arrive to cash it (see below for more information). Direct deposit forms are available on our website at [www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs/forms](http://www.gvsu.edu/studentjobs/forms). Additionally, students are able to sign up for direct deposit online by visiting [www.gvsu.edu/payroll](http://www.gvsu.edu/payroll).

If a student does not elect to use direct deposit their paycheck will be mailed to the permanent address listed in their file. For international students, the paycheck will be mailed to the local address listed in their file. To change this address, please contact the Payroll Office at [payroll@gvsu.edu](mailto:payroll@gvsu.edu) or (616) 331-2237.

# BENEFITS

## Work Breaks

If possible, student employees should be allowed a paid 15 minute break for each 4 hours of continuous work. If the work period is less than four hours, breaks are not required. Break periods may not be accumulated and are not reason to arrive at work fifteen minutes late or leave work fifteen minutes early. Students must discuss the appropriate times and condition of break periods with their supervisor.

## Holidays

In general, student employees are not required to work on a legal holiday nor are they paid holiday pay. However, certain offices/departments may be required to maintain services on certain holidays and students may be scheduled to work. All wages will be paid at straight time rates. Any student has the option of declining work on a legal holiday, but only if their employment was not contingent on working holiday hours.

## Sick Leave

See the [State of Michigan Paid Medical Leave Act \(PMLA\) policy](#). In the event of illness, the student employee must notify his/her supervisor as early as possible on each day of absence. Failure to give notification shall be cause for dismissal or other appropriate employment corrective action.

**NOTE:** Students are not eligible to receive paid sick leave.

## **Vacation**

Vacation benefits are not extended to student employees. Students may make arrangements with their supervisor for time off without pay. These arrangements should be made as soon as possible to prevent any issues with scheduling.

## **Overtime**

Student employees should never work over 25 hours per week (20 for international students) during the academic year or over 40 hours during a break or the spring/summer semester. Students who do work over the allotted hour amount will receive a violation and a notice via email. After 3 violations, the hire will be terminated and the student will not longer be able to work on campus.

## **University Breaks**

GVSU offices may still be open during some breaks and student employees are able, and encouraged, to continue working. Campuses and offices are open during Spring Break, MLK Day as well as the beginning and end sections of Winter Break. GVSU students are not required to work during breaks in which GVSU campuses and offices are closed. These breaks usually include Labor day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving weekend (Thursday-Sunday) and the section of Winter Break that spans between Christmas Eve and New Years Day.

Some offices continue to function even when GVSU campuses are closed. Please make sure to communicate with your supervisor at the start of your hire if and when you are expected to work any breaks.

# DISMISSAL

The university may terminate a student's employment at any time. Causes for dismissal may be, but are not limited to the following:

1. A student fails to enroll for the required number of credits at GVSU during any term of employment.
2. Unacceptable job performance.
3. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
4. Malicious or harmful behavior (this is cause for immediate dismissal and termination).
5. A student is convicted of a criminal offense.
6. Lack of funding.

# GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Sometimes conflicts are inevitable. An employee with a grievance shall first discuss the matter with his/her supervisor no later than five (5) working days from the date of the occurrence. (If the grievance involves a termination of employment, the employee will go directly to Step 2 below.) As used herein, working days are Monday through Friday irrespective of an individual's actual schedule. If the employee is not satisfied with the supervisor's response, he/she may file a formal grievance as follows:

In the event a student employee feels unjustly treated with regard to pay, termination, or other employment related circumstances, that student should:

## Step 1

Seek recourse directly with your supervisor. Be clear about your concerns and the desired outcome you would like to have. Describe the incident in as much detail as possible. If possible, include date(s) of the event(s).

- How did you feel about what happened?
- What was not acceptable to you about that specific interaction or situation?
- What outcome would you like to have?
- What are you willing to do to create an outcome that would work for you and your supervisor?

## **Step 2**

If the grievance is not resolved in Step 1, the employee has five (5) working days in which to appeal in writing to the Student Employment Office. Student Employment Office has ten (10) working days in which to schedule and hold a meeting with the employee and the supervisor. After the meeting is held, Student Employment Office professional staff will communicate its answer in writing to the employee and the supervisor within five (5) working days.

## **Step 3**

If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the employee has five (5) working days in which to appeal, in writing, to the Associate Vice President for Financial Aid. The Associate Vice President for Financial Aid will communicate his/her decision in writing to the student employee, supervisor, and the Student Employment Office within five (5) working days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Vice President for shall be final.

All grievances shall be considered permanently settled if the employee does not file the next step in accordance with the prescribed time limits or upon termination of student status.

## **Confidentiality**

As with all negotiations that rise to the level of intervention, it is appropriate to keep the situation confidential. This includes not discussing or complaining about the situation to others outside of the situation and not having external discussions of the meetings or conversations while a mutually agreeable solution is being reached. This applies to all parties concerned.



# TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT

## **Task Completion**

If you are assigned a project or specific responsibility to complete make sure you regularly communicate the status of that project to the appropriate person. If you encounter problem or have issues completing the project, you must make arrangements for its completion with your supervisors. Most projects have deadlines that are set and need to be strictly followed.

## **Communication**

If you are given a task and you are unsure of what needs to be done, it is YOUR responsibility to ask questions and ensure you have a clear understanding of the task and corresponding deadlines.

## **Policies**

Know your department's policies. Is there a dress code? What is the policy on cell phone use while at work? How do short breaks or lunch breaks work in your department? If you are unsure about any of these policies, please ask your supervisor.

## **Mistakes**

Your student position is a great opportunity for personal growth. Don't be discouraged if you make a mistake. Admit it, learn from it, and ask what you can do to help resolve the resulting situation.

## **Stay Informed**

It is important that you know what is going on around campus so that you can act as a resource and an ambassador for your department.

## **Keep Busy**

If you feel you do not have anything to do, ask if something needs to be done. You can always clean and straighten up your work area. Look for someone to help or additional tasks that need to be addressed.

## **Challenge**

Each student employee has a responsibility to continue to improve Grand Valley State University and your department. Please make suggestions and address concerns as they appear. If you have a new idea, speak up in a respectful manner.

## **Continuing Employment**

Employment for the following academic year is NOT guaranteed. Students will be rehired based on their performance from the previous year. Students interested in continuing employment for the following academic year should ask their supervisor what procedure they should follow to apply for their current position for the following year.

## **Academics**

Your first priority is to be a student and it is important that you pursue high academic achievement. You must balance your student job and your academic work so that you can be successful in both. Plan ahead so that you can meet commitments within your department. Review specific needs and work expectations with your supervisor. Remember, you CANNOT clock hours during the same time that your classes are in session.

# BEST PRACTICES

## Be On Time

Your agreed upon start time means you should be actively working at that time. If you work on Mondays at 9:00am, you should arrive 10 minutes or so before 9:00am to settle in and get ready so you can be working at 9:00am. Promptly notify your supervisor if you are running late, and state your anticipated arrival time.

## Maintain Detailed Records

Write down your tasks and describe how to complete them as a reminder for yourself and a guide for future student employees in your position. Take notes during communications with your supervisor so you can recall what was said at a later date.

## Use Professional Language

In person, on the phone, and in email messages make sure to communicate clearly and with professional language. Do not chat speak or slang, and consider your audience in regards to formality; emails to your supervisor will likely be more formal than emails to your peers. Dress professionally; ask your supervisor about the dress code. Observe how your coworkers and supervisors dress and emulate their level of professional attire. Some office on campus may have higher professional attire standards in comparison to others.

## Understand the Big Picture

It is important to have a working knowledge of the purpose of your office and its main goals to ensure that you are continually contributing to its overall mission. Even though the task you are assigned may seem trivial, it is important to the overall function and purpose of the office.

## **Consider the Details**

Managing large tasks and assignments in your work is important; however, it is also important to make sure that those tasks are completed with care and attention to detail. The consistency, accuracy, precision, and reliability of a completed task as just as important as the purpose of the task itself.

## **Prioritize**

If you are assigned a project or specific responsibility to complete make sure you regularly check in with your supervisor to ensure that each task you are in charge of is completed in a timely manner; some tasks may be more urgently required in comparison to others.

## **Teamwork**

If you are a member of a team, make sure you are doing your part to contribute to the team's overall mission, function, and purpose. When someone else is working on a project you should offer assistance or offer to review the completed work.