GVSU Graduate School Special Project Graduate Assistant (SPGA)
Proposal Holistic Evaluation Rubric

Purpose

- This rubric supports a holistic review of SPGA proposals. Reviewers should consider the proposal as a whole and assign one overall rating based on the strength of the project, its strategic value, the appropriateness of graduate assistant support, and the quality of the educational experience for the graduate student.

Rating	**Holistic Description**
4 – Highly Recommended	The proposal presents a clear, compelling, and well-developed special project that strongly advances research or teaching. The need for a GA is convincing, and the proposed level of support (1.0 or 0.5) is appropriate to the scope of work. Responsibilities are substantive, clearly defined, appropriate for a graduate student, and provide meaningful opportunities for learning, professional development, and application of graduate-level knowledge or skills. The project has clear intended outcomes and demonstrates the potential for meaningful impact beyond routine unit operations. The proposal is complete and provides strong evidence that an SPGA investment is warranted.
3 – Recommended	The proposal presents a well-defined and worthwhile project that aligns with research or teaching. The need for a GA and proposed level of support are generally appropriate and supported. Responsibilities are suitable for graduate-level work and provide a meaningful educational or professional experience. Expected outcomes and potential impact are evident, although some elements may need additional specificity or development. Overall, the proposal provides sufficient justification for SPGA support.

2 – Recommended with Reservations	The proposal identifies a potentially valuable project, but important elements are underdeveloped or raise questions. Strategic alignment may be broad; the need for a GA or requested level of support may not be fully demonstrated; responsibilities may include work that is more operational than graduate-level; or the educational benefit, outcomes, or anticipated impact may be limited or unclear. The project may warrant support, but the proposal does not yet make a strong case for SPGA investment relative to stronger proposals.
1 – Not Recommended	The proposal does not demonstrate a sufficiently compelling case for SPGA support. The project may have limited connection to research or teaching, resemble routine operational work, lack a clear need for graduate-level assistance, or provide limited educational benefit to the student. Responsibilities, outcomes, scope, or requested level of support may be unclear or inappropriate. Significant revision would be needed to demonstrate that the project warrants SPGA investment.

Review Considerations

Reviewers should consider the following dimensions when determining the overall rating:

- Strategic value: How meaningfully does the project advance research or teaching or address an important institutional need/priority?
- Project value and impact: Is this a defined special project with clear outcomes and potential impact, rather than ongoing or routine operational work?
- Need for GA support: Is there a compelling reason for a graduate assistant, and is the requested 1.0 or 0.5 appointment proportionate to the work?
- Graduate-level work: Are the responsibilities substantive and appropriate for the knowledge, skills, and capabilities expected of a graduate student?
- Educational benefit: Will the GA gain meaningful academic, professional, leadership, research, or applied learning from the experience?
- Feasibility and clarity: Is the project sufficiently developed, with clear responsibilities, supervision, outcomes, and a reasonable scope for the appointment period?