

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

General Provisions

The Oregon State University Graduate School provides detailed guidelines for the employment of graduate teaching and research assistants. This administrative memorandum should be considered an adjunct to university guidance which should be referenced for complete detail and clarification.

Eligibility

To qualify for appointment as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) or graduate research assistant (GRA) the student must (1) have attained a superior record as an undergraduate student or as a graduate student, (2) be enrolled as a regular full time graduate student as Oregon State University while the assistantship is in effect, and (3) be making satisfactory progress toward an advanced degree.

Terms of Appointment

In the College of Forestry, GTA's are normally appointed at .30 FTE for the academic year (9 months); GRA's at .50 FTE for the full year (12 months). GTA's receive stipend payments monthly during the academic year; GRA's receive a stipend payment each month of the year.

Service to the Institution

All graduate assistantships are required to provide service to OSU to justify their stipends. The GTRA on a .30 FTE 9-month assistantship is expected to provide approximately 15 hours of service per week. GRA's appointed for 12 months at .50 FTE are expected to provide about 15 hours of service per week during the academic year and full time (ordinarily about 40 hours per week) during the remaining portion of the year. Time spent on thesis research is considered official service if the thesis problem is an essential phase of an approved Forest Research Laboratory project.

Graduate assistants are provided stipends in recognition of the service they provide. This is not a salary or wage dependent on the actual hours they work each month.

GRA/GTA appointments are annual appointments, renewable yearly provided eligibility requirements continue to be met and provided services rendered by the student are satisfactory.

Course Load

Graduate assistants must register for and complete a minimum of 9 credits each term the assistantship is in effect, including Summer Term. Normally, assistants on .30

FTE 9 month (GTA) or .50 FTE 12 month (GRA) appointments register for a maximum of 12 credits each term. All students are advised to register for the maximum credits.

With approval from the Department Head, GRA's and GTA's may petition the Graduate School for permission to take up to 17 credits per term. However, the student must pay additional tuition costs incurred.

Tuition and Fees

All graduate assistants must pay the University incidental fees, but are exempt from tuition under course load requirement as defined above.

Appointment Procedures

Department Heads are responsible for conducting preliminary negotiations with prospective graduate students and for familiarizing them with provisions governing graduate assistant appointments. They are expected to adhere to general policies for appointment outlined in Administrative Rules, Oregon State Board of Higher Education. University Affirmative Action Office procedures for recruiting and appointing graduate assistants must also be followed, including establishment of a GRA/GTA pool. Assistance with AAO procedures is available from the Dean's Office.

Classification and Stipends

The stipends of graduate assistants are established by the College of Forestry and revised annually for cost-of-living and other adjustments within guidelines provided by the University and the Legislature.

The GRA stipend schedule has two levels related to education, experience, and the consequent ability of the GRA to operate with judgment and independent action on research assignments. The department Head determines which assistants are qualified for GRA III based on these criteria:

GRA I: Students with B.S. degrees in forestry or related field and modest professional and research experience.

GRA III: Students with education equivalent to B.S. and M.S. degrees in forestry or related field plus substantial related research experience that is relevant to the assistantship assignment.

Similarly, two stipend levels are provided for GTA positions, GTA I and GTA III will apply to all teaching assistants with less than two full years of relevant teaching experience at .30 FTE.