

# Graduate Assistant Hiring Guidelines

## 2019- 2020

Graduate Assistant (GA) regulations are documented as [ACAF 4.00](#) in the USC Policies and Procedures Manual.

1. Graduate Assistants (GA) must be hired (and processed) by day 20 of Fall and Spring semesters to receive financial credits to their Bursar account. If terminated before the midpoint of the semester, students will lose these credits and be billed for full tuition.
  - a. **Non-Residents** receive Tuition Exemptions that are a credit on their Bursar Accounts to cover the non-resident portion of their tuition. Non-residents who are Graduate Assistants in the Spring semester will also receive tuition exemptions in the Summer term, even if not hired as a GA for Summer.
  - b. **Residents and Non-Residents** are awarded health insurance subsidies (Fall: \$420, Spring: \$580) if purchasing mandatory health insurance through the university. Students may waive the mandatory insurance by providing proof of insurance before the published deadline in September/January.
2. The categories and requirements for appointment as **Salaried** Graduate Assistants are listed in [ACAF 4.00](#)  
*Note: Data reporting for national surveys is based on Fall hiring object codes. Use separate slots for students with multiple types of GA positions (ie. Research and Teaching)*
  - a. **Graduate Staff Assistant (Still under discussion with HR about compliance with federal labor regulations)** - provides administrative assistance. *Employment as a GA should be related to the student's academic progression – the educational aspect of responsibilities must surpass the service aspect.*
  - b. **Graduate Research Assistant (PeopleSoft Code SGRA)** - assists faculty or staff in conducting research.
  - c. **Graduate Instructional Assistant (PeopleSoft Code SGIA)** - assists with instruction, but cannot be listed as the instructor of record:
    - i. All Instructional Assistants must attend [TA/IA Orientation and GRAD 701](#), a series of workshops for Teaching Assistants and Instructional Assistants sponsored by the Graduate School.
    - ii. All International Instructional Assistants must successfully complete the [International Teaching Assistant \(ITA\) Workshop and Assessment](#) to determine if their English skills meet requirements to be appointed as an Instructional Assistant.
    - iii. The [Trained TA/IA/ITA Database](#) is available on the Graduate School website.
3. **NON-GA POSITIONS: Hourly Graduate Student positions** Payment is based on hours entered weekly in ITAMS. ACA, IRS and FSLA implications for each student's cumulative hours/week must be considered by hiring departments. No GA benefits are associated with hourly hires.

#### 4. Graduate Assistant Hiring Requirements

Requirement	Minimum	Maximum	Exception
Work hours/week during the academic year	10 GA hours (see 6a below for details)	20 total GA hours	Maximum 25 GA hours with approval from Graduate School. (See 6h for more information)
Stipend/term	\$1200	Determined by department/college	
Pay rate	Equivalent to \$1200/semester @ 10 hours/week, prorated for additional hours/week. (i.e., 20 hours/week = \$2400 minimum for one semester.) Federal Minimum Wage requirements apply.	Not more than postdoctoral and/or adjunct instructors in same unit.	
Enrollment	Fall/Spring = 6 credit hours  Summer = 3 credit hours	Determined by department/college	1-5 credit hours if approved and coded for Special Enrollment status. (See 6f for more information)

#### 5. Hiring date ranges—

- Official Academic Year: August 16 - May 15; Summer: May 16 - August 15
- Two-week extensions were approved June 26, 2015 for positions with responsibilities before Fall or after Spring semesters: Fall may begin August 1; Spring may end May 31.
- Fiscal year hires, July 1-June 30, can be accommodated only if stipend is enough to cover the minimum requirements for 4 terms: Summer, Fall, Spring and following Summer.
- Single-term hire for Summer is the only date range that can cross the fiscal year change.

#### 6. Additional information

- The initial minimum requirement of 10 hours must be in place for a GA before a hire for less than 10 hours/week can be processed. If two separate departmental hires will make up a student's minimum hours, please submit on the same day and indicate the shared position in the comments section in VIP.
- Check VIP's **Show Me** dropdown menu for "**Rejected New Hires**" daily to determine if any hires are returned to the department at any step in the approval process.
- Check **status of individual hires** in the last window of a VIP hiring page. D=department/College Business Office, I=International Student Services, G=Graduate School, P=Payroll. G plus Y beside Process Ind means the hire has cleared the Graduate School.
- Students can see in **Self-Service Carolina** when their Student Type changes to Graduate Assistant. Bursar accounts will reflect the change *the day after* the Student Type changes in Banner.
- Processing time** takes a minimum of 3 days to clear all approvals before tuition exemptions and insurance subsidies are applied to student bills for US citizens; 4 days for international students.
- [Request for Special Enrollment](#) forms (necessary for GAs enrolling in 1-5 credit hours, usually in final terms) must be submitted to the Graduate School. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 1 credit hour **before** Special Enrollment/Z-Status will be approved.
- Departments are expected to enforce the GA enrollment requirement. GA positions will be **terminated** for students not enrolled appropriately by the final drop/add date of the term.
- Submit the [Graduate Assistant Appeal to Work 21-25 Hours](#) form to the Graduate School.  
**Note: additional hours are not available for International Students.**