33.99.08.C0.02 Graduate Assistants

Revised: March 23, 2026
Next Scheduled Review: March 17, 2030
Revision History

Procedure Summary

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) recognizes that providing graduate students with teaching, research, and administrative research assistantships is critical to the success of graduate programs at TAMU-CC. This procedure outlines the types of graduate assistantships and the requirements for students becoming graduate assistants. The students' responsibilities, their compensation, and the evaluation of their work is also detailed.

Procedure

1. GENERAL

1.1. Assistantships are awards intended to assist students financially during their period of study. They should not interfere with a student's timely and successful progression towards graduation. All graduate assistants are "at will" employees.

1.2. Assistantships must support the educational experience of the student and be related to the student's graduate program.

1.3. Graduate assistant appointments (singularly or in any combination) are for a maximum of 50% FTE to prevent overload working conditions, which may threaten the student's academic progress and the quality of assigned duties.

1.4. Administrative responsibility for graduate assistantships rests within the unit in which the student is employed, in consultation with all other relevant units.

1.5. Graduate teaching assistants who are primarily responsible for teaching a course for credit and/or for assigning final grades must meet certain academic qualifications described in section 3 of this procedure, be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training, and be regularly evaluated.

1.6. Graduate assistants must reapply for each appointment, and the

assistantship is contingent upon satisfactory progress toward their degree.

2. TYPES OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

2.1. There are three (3) types of graduate assistantships: Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships, and Administrative Research Assistantships.

2.2. Teaching Assistantships

Teaching Assistants (TAs) are typically responsible for directing lab sections, leading discussion sections, grading assignments, and in some cases, teaching regular classes of courses numbered below 5000. TAs may not be the instructor of record for courses numbered 5000 or above. TAs may assist with laboratories for 5000 and 6000 level courses but may not teach or assist with a course in which they are enrolled.

2.3. Research Assistantships

Research Assistants (RAs) are responsible for working on research projects in collaboration with, or under the direction of, a faculty or staff member. Duties assigned to RAs may include gathering, organizing, and analyzing data and assisting faculty or non-academic units on campus. Duties assigned to RAs must be relevant to the graduate program and the professional goals of the student. The supervising faculty or staff member determines the students' responsibilities and is responsible for monitoring and evaluating their performance.

2.4. Administrative Research Assistantships

Administrative Research Assistants (ARAs) are responsible for providing professional administrative services to include in related research, in collaboration with, or under the direction of, a faculty or staff member. Responsibilities vary among departments, but duties assigned to ARAs must be relevant to the graduate program and/or the professional goals of the student. The supervising faculty or staff member determines the students' responsibilities and is responsible for monitoring and evaluating their performance.

3. QUALIFICATIONS

3.1. Graduate assistants must be authorized to work in the United States, and employment is contingent upon an acceptable criminal background investigation.

3.2. All graduate assistants must hold a bachelor's degree or the equivalent and be admitted as students for graduate study. They must also be in good

academic and disciplinary standing.

3.3. TAs given full responsibility for assigning final grades for a course must have at least 18 hours of graduate coursework in the field of their teaching responsibilities. If the TA is to be listed as the instructor of record for a class, they must be credentialed by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation before classes are assigned to them. Individual programs/departments/academic units (e.g., college, school, library) may have additional qualification requirements.

3.4. Each employing departmental unit or university office will review the qualifications of all appointees at the time of appointment to ensure compliance with existing university rules and procedures. Any exceptions to the above requirements must be approved in advance by the Associate Vice President of Graduate Excellence. Appeals regarding the Associate Vice President of Graduate Excellence's decision will be reviewed by the Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation.

4. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

All appointments will be on the basis of qualifications, suitability, and student status, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law. All appointments must adhere to the laws and regulations of the State of Texas and The Texas A&M University System.

5. DUTIES

A fundamental responsibility of all graduate assistants is to work closely with their supervisors in carrying out assigned duties and at the same time making satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree programs. Service assignments for each graduate assistant will be outlined at the time of appointment. The exact duties will be determined by the needs of the department, as well as the background, qualifications, and professional goals of the graduate assistant. Work assignments should consider both the needs of the department and the graduate student's obligation to make satisfactory progress in their chosen academic program.

6. APPOINTMENT

6.1. Offers of assistantships are contingent upon available funds and admission of the applicant to a graduate program and are made by the head of the unit that will employ the graduate assistant. Graduate assistantship appointments are normally made for a 4½-month academic semester, summer term, 9 months, or 12 months. If grant funded, the term of an appointment for a graduate assistant may be based on the period of available

grant funding as stated in their initial appointment letter.

6.2. Graduate assistants are required to work 20 hours per week (50% FTE) on average. The exact days and hours may vary and should be determined in coordination with the graduate assistant's supervisor prior to the start of the term. Graduate assistants are expected to work throughout the entire employment period in the Fall (August-December) and Spring (January-May) semesters except on university holidays.

6.3. Any deviation from a 20 hours per week (50% FTE) appointment must receive prior approval from the Associate Vice President and Dean of Graduate Excellence. International students should also consult with the International Student Programs and Support Office.

7. INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

7.1. International graduate assistants in an F-1 status including TAs, RAs, and ARAs must be separated from university employment upon the TAMU-CC official graduation date, except the following situations:

(a) If a student is on approved Optional Practical Training (OPT) and the position at TAMU-CC is in the student's field of study, the student can continue working at TAMU-CC until the OPT ends as long as there is no gap in employment.

(b) If a student finishes one program of study at TAMU-CC and starts another program of study also at the TAMU-CC, the student may continue the employment at TAMU-CC without any interruption as long as the student is enrolled for the next semester.

7.2. International student employees seeking to continue working remotely after the last day of classes for a semester, during campus breaks, or other work abroad instances, must follow the university's alternate work location process including review by the Export Control Officer as outlined in university procedure *33.06.01.C0.01, Flexible Work Arrangements*.

7.3. Texas Education Code Section 54.212 requires international teaching assistants whose native language is not English to obtain English proficiency certification before serving as TAs. English proficiency certification can be achieved by submitting official test scores indicating satisfactory scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS). This requirement does not apply to a student who has earned a baccalaureate or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher education in the United States or an institution in another English-only speaking country or has successfully completed a university-

approved English as a Second Language program. A full list of countries that require proficiency certification can be found on the university's Admissions website.

8. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

8.1. Salary ranges for graduate assistantships are set by the Office of Graduate Excellence. Individual academic units or non-academic units may set the exact salary amount for each assistantship based on the type of degree program and level of academic progression (e.g., pre- vs. post-candidacy for doctoral students), the assigned duties, and other relevant factors.

8.2. Graduate assistantships, like other student employee appointments, are temporary appointments and do not qualify for vacation, sick leave, emergency leave, or holiday pay. Social Security and Workers' Compensation insurance benefits, however, are provided to all student employees. Graduate students who work at least 50% time for 4½ months are eligible to participate in group insurance programs. For more information on benefits, see system policy *31.02, Employee Insurance and Retirement Benefits* and system regulation *31.02.02, Group Insurance Programs*.

8.3. Graduate assistants and their spouses and children who are not residents of Texas may qualify for in-state tuition rates if the graduate assistant is employed at least half-time in a TA or RA position which relates to the graduate assistant's degree program.

9. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

9.1. A graduate assistant is a student employee performing part-time work incidental to academic training in an occupational category that requires all incumbents to be students as a condition of employment. Accordingly, the first priority of a graduate assistant should be satisfactory progress in their academic program. At the same time, graduate assistants have responsibilities for satisfactory performance of employment duties.

9.2. Graduate assistants are responsible for becoming familiar with the university's rules and procedures and other general academic requirements in the University Catalog. Additional guidance can be found in the Student Code of Conduct and the Graduate Assistantship Handbook. These documents are available in the Appendix section of this procedure and on the university's website.

10. ENROLLMENT

10.1. Each graduate assistant is expected to make steady progress toward the

completion of an advanced degree and meet minimum enrollment requirements. Any student employed as a graduate assistant during a regular semester (Fall or Spring) must be enrolled for at least six (6) hours of graduate coursework in that semester.

10.2. Any student serving as a graduate assistant during the summer term must be enrolled in at least three (3) hours of graduate coursework during the combined summer term.

10.3. Individual programs/departments/academic units may have more stringent credit hour requirements.

11. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

All new graduate assistants will complete the required training courses as outlined in university procedure *33.05.02.C0.01, Required Training for Employees and Affiliates*, including Title IX training, and any safety training required by the courses. They must also undergo an orientation prior to beginning work. The safety training, if any, and orientation will be conducted by the employing department and include an overview of requirements, facilities, duties, and university rules and procedures.

12. EVALUATION AND CONTINUATION OF EMPLOYMENT

12.1. Each department is responsible for determining the review and evaluation process of graduate assistants and for informing graduate assistants of this process. The process of evaluation may vary by department and type of assistantship and may include written assessment of work by an individual faculty member or supervisor, classroom visitation by designated faculty members, and student evaluations. The results of reviews and evaluations should be discussed with the graduate assistant.

12.2. In cases where remedial measures are indicated to improve the graduate assistant's performance, the graduate assistant must be informed of the performance deficiencies and the required changes to resolve the problem. Situations leading to recommendation of dismissal for cause should be described in writing to the graduate assistant, with a copy sent to the academic unit dean/director or appropriate administrator.

12.3. Decisions regarding the reappointment of graduate assistants will be based on the needs of the institution and past performance of the graduate assistant. To be reappointed, graduate assistants must have demonstrated satisfactory progress in their academic programs and satisfactory performance of their employment duties at the university.

12.4. Graduate assistant appointments are "at-will," which means that the

university or the graduate assistant may terminate the employment at any time. A graduate assistant's continued employment will be in jeopardy for reasons including, but not limited to, failure to meet requirements, loss of funding, unacceptable performance/conduct, or academic delinquency. All involuntary dismissals must be reviewed and approved by Human Resources prior to implementing the dismissal.

13. GRIEVANCES

Graduate assistants, like all employees of TAMU-CC, have the right to file a grievance related to employment. Complaints must be made in accordance with the provisions of system regulation *32.01.02, Complaint and Appeal Process for Non-faculty Employees* and university procedure *32.01.02.C0.0,1 Complaint and Appeal Process for Non-Faculty Employees*. However, a complaint alleging discrimination, sexual harassment, and/or related retaliation must be filed in accordance with system regulation *08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance* and university rule *08.01.01.C1, Civil Rights Compliance*. Contact the Office of Compliance Services for more information.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Texas Education Code Section 54.212
System Regulation *08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance*
System Policy *31.02, Employee Insurance and Retirement Benefits*
System Regulation *31.02.02, Group Insurance Programs*
System Regulation *32.01.02, Complaint and Appeal Process for Non-faculty Employees*
System Regulation *33.99.08, Student Employment*
System Regulation *33.99.09, Employment of Foreign Nationals*
University Rule *08.01.01.C1, Civil Rights Compliance*
University Procedure *32.01.02.C0.01, Complaint and Appeal Process for Non-faculty Employees*
University Procedure *33.05.02.C0.01, Required Training for Employees and Affiliates*
University Procedure *33.06.01.C0.01, Flexible Work Arrangements*
University Procedure *33.99.08.C0.01, Student Employment*
University Procedure *33.99.08.C0.03, Student Internships*

This procedure supersedes:

- *33.99.08.C2, Graduate Teaching Assistants*

Appendix

Student Code of Conduct
Graduate Assistantship Handbook

Contact Office

Contact for clarification and interpretation:	Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation 361.825.3881