



funding agency. If no other funds are available, the Graduate School will cover the cost of health insurance for a GA I student if available. Insurance received will be considered taxable income.

Graduate Research Assistant II - all other research doctoral or masters students.

The Graduate Assistant (GA) is divided into two roles: GA I and GA II

Graduate Assistant I work duties are greater than 50% devoted to research and teaching activities (research and teaching activities can include assisting in grading papers, lab work, etc. or assisting a faculty member with research or time spent involved with thesis and dissertation research). Graduate Assistant I tuition remission will not be taxed due to federal government regulations.

Graduate Assistant II work duties are less than 50% devoted to research and teaching. Graduate Assistant II work duties may include clerical, administrative and other appropriate duties so long as these occupy the minority of the student's work assignment. Graduate Assistant II tuition remission will be taxed due to federal government regulations.

- II QUALIFICATIONS: Selection of students for graduate assistantships is based on academic performance, letters of recommendation and, in some cases, standardized test scores. The student must be enrolled for at least six hours per semester, unless the graduate assistant is involved in their thesis or dissertation preparation. Some departments require a higher course load.

Note that failure to enroll for a full (6hr) load will result in classification as a part-time student and will affect deferment of student loan payments. Students enrolled for less than 3 hours will be subject to FICA withholding. The ONLY exception to the 6 hour full load requirement is if the student is in the final stages of their program and a reduced load is justified.

In addition to above, only those graduate students meeting the following criteria will be eligible to apply for Graduate School Tuition Remission:

Recipient of (or applicant for) a USA Graduate Assistantship, funded by the Graduate School allocation to the department program.

Recipient of (or applicant for) a Graduate Research Assistantship funded by an extramural grant or contract.

Recipient of (or applicant for) a Graduate Assistantship funded by a budgeted position in a college, department or program, specifically designated as a "graduate assistantship."

- III APPOINTMENT OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS: Applications for graduate assistantships are available online at:







in part or in full from external sources, other parties may be involved as necessary (e.g. Institutional Research Grants and Contracts).

**MEDIATION AND RESOLUTION** Upon receipt of the grievance, the Chair shall set up a conference with the Grievant and the Respondent. The chair should schedule and hold the conference as soon as practicable, ensuring there is no delay that might unfairly penalize the graduate assistant. The Respondent may submit a written response to the Chair prior to this meeting. The Chair acts as a mediator to seek a mutually satisfactory resolution. If a mutually satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the appropriate Dean will review the grievance and evidence presented and decide on a resolution. A Grievant or Respondent who is unsatisfied with the Dean's resolution may appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School.

**APPEAL** The Dean of the Graduate School will review the mediated resolution to ensure that proper procedure has been followed throughout the process, render a decision, and notify the Grievant and Respondent. The Dean of the Graduate School may decide to uphold the mediated resolution, revise the mediated resolution, decide on a new resolution, or dismiss the grievance. The decision of the Dean of the Graduate School is considered final and is not subject to further appeal. The Dean of the Graduate School is party to the grievance; the appeal will be reviewed by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### X TERMINATION OF GRADUATE ASSISTANT APPOINTMENT

Any appointment may be curtailed, diminished, or terminated at any time for lack of funds; failure of the student to maintain satisfactory student status or to make appropriate progress toward the degree; no further need for the functions to be performed; incompetence or misconduct of the graduate assistant or fellow; or failure to complete the degree requirements.

A termination of appointment action is initiated by the Chair of the department to which the graduate assistant is assigned. The Chair meets with the graduate assistant and explains the causes of termination.

The Department Chair forwards a recommendation for termination of appointment to the Director of Graduate Studies of the appropriate college. The letter explains the basis of the recommendation for termination. The Director of Graduate Studies reviews the recommendation for termination of appointment and may investigate the circumstances of the termination. After the review, the Director of Graduate Studies sends a recommendation regarding the termination to the Dean of the Graduate School. Only the Graduate Dean may terminate an appointment.

Grievances in regard to termination shall follow the Procedure for Resolving Complaints (See IX)



**Appointment criteria:** The Applicant will meet all existing criteria for general graduate assistantships. Recommendation letters should specifically address the applicant's potential as a teacher. Graduate teaching assistants for whom English is a second language must make a satisfactory score on a test of spoken English before being given classroom assignments, or provide other reliable evidence of proficiency in written and oral communication.

**Appointment process:** GTA appointments require an Appointment Form, a PA (paper or electronic), a GTA Supplemental Appointment Form, and a completed file as indicated on the Supplemental Appointment Form (rec letters, transcripts, biographical data form, CV, and USA Faculty Consent Form). This process is very similar to the appointment of part-time faculty. A GTA appointment requires a background check.

**Remuneration:** Graduate teaching assistants receive a stipend as well as remission of 10 semester hours per term tuition. The university is committed to working toward equity with other regional graduate institutions in order to attract the best possible students to these assistantships.

**Rights and responsibilities:** Graduate teaching assistants will have access to such professional development activities as workshops, seminars, or other instructional resources established for faculty growth. Those graduate teaching assistants with primary responsibility in the classroom must comply with the provisions of the USA Faculty Handbook.

**Evaluation and reappointment:** As with all assistantships, the initial appointment is for one academic year. Teaching assistants may be reappointed for an additional year subject to satisfactory completion of teaching responsibilities, satisfactory academic performance, and timely progress toward the degree. A written evaluation of teaching performance, including input from students as well as supervisors or regular faculty members, should be submitted each semester to the student and forwarded to the Graduate School which will maintain a record of the evaluations.