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## **I. FORWARD**

### **Purpose**

Graduate Assistants (GAs) are, first and foremost, graduate students pursuing an education. The opportunity to work closely with faculty and undergraduate students in teaching, research, or administrative environments is an integral part of that education. The University is committed to ensuring that graduate assistant assignments are productive, enhance student qualifications, meet funding support and workload goals, and are consistent with the educational objectives of the student and his or her program.

Salisbury University supports graduate students by:

Advancing the student's graduate education through practicum-based experiences, including the development and application of teaching, research and other skills, while also advancing the mission of the institution.

Providing financial support, including stipends and tuition assistance, to aid degree-seeking students enrolled in SU masters programs and appointed as graduate assistants in the pursuit of their graduate degrees.

This handbook is intended to provide information regarding graduate assistantships at Salisbury University and follows guidelines and procedures set forth by the [University System of Maryland Policy on Graduate Assistantships](#).

### **Equal Opportunity Statement**

Salisbury University (SU) has a strong institutional commitment to diversity and equal employment and educational opportunities for its faculty, staff and students. To that end, the University prohibits (S

selection for training. Consistent with its obligations under the law, it also extends to the maintenance of affirmative action programs for minorities, women, persons with disabilities and veterans.

SU assigns a high priority to the implementation of its equal opportunity policy, and the University is committed to assuring compliance with all laws prohibiting discrimination in employment and educational programs. The Office of Institutional Equity is responsible for the campus-wide administration and implementation of equal opportunity policies and affirmative action programs. Members of the University community are encouraged to contact the Associate Vice President of Institutional Equity for questions, complaints or concerns about these matters:

Office of Institutional Equity  
[equity@salisbury.edu](mailto:equity@salisbury.edu)  
[www.salisbury.edu/equity](http://www.salisbury.edu/equity)

## **Non Discrimination**

Salisbury University's policies, programs, and activities comply with federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and veteran status. If you wish to request ADA accommodation, please telephone 410-543-6087 or send an email to [disabilitysupport@salisbury.edu](mailto:disabilitysupport@salisbury.edu).

## **Sexual Harassment**

Salisbury University is committed to creating a safe and welcoming campus environment. The University established this [sexual harassment policy](#) to prohibit sexual harassment, to establish a complaint procedure to investigate allegations of sexual harassment, and to provide for appropriate discipline for persons who violate this policy.

## **Information**

Available GA positions will be posted on the Graduate School website as they become available. Student should apply directly to the hiring supervisor as listed in the job posting.

Every effort has been made to make this a comprehensive reference for Graduate Assistants. Any questions or requests for clarification should be forwarded to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School  
Holloway Hall 267  
410-548-5395  
[jlscott@salisbury.edu](mailto:jlscott@salisbury.edu)

## **II. TYPES OF ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Graduate Assistant or “GA” is the common title used at the university level. Within that classification, Salisbury University has three types of assistantships available. Each graduate assistant should be placed into one of these categories. On occasion, graduate assistants may have appointments in more than one category.

### **Graduate Assistant – Teaching (TA)**

Teaching Assistants work closely within a department to assist in the delivery of academic information. Departments develop their own hiring criteria. It is expected that all TAs will meet Salisbury University’s English Language proficiency requirements. The specific duties vary across disciplines and departments but generally involve the following:

- a) Assuming teaching responsibility for a laboratory or discussion session of a course.
- b) Assisting a faculty member in the grading, advising, and preparation of materials for a course(s).
- c) Assisting in general departmental administrative duties, such as advising, help sessions, presentations, workshops, etc.
- d) Coaching in Athletics.

### **Graduate Assistant – Research (RA)**

Research Assistants may work in a large variety of settings with the common thread of collecting, analyzing or supporting research data. Data support can be for faculty or departments. The specific duties vary according to the nature of the research but generally involve the following:

- a) Assist with design of research components.
- b) Assist with research and data gathering.
- c) Assist with non-instructional laboratory activities
- d) Provide data input and reports.

### **Graduate Assistant – Administrative (GA)**

Perform administrative support functions in an office setting. There is a wide range of duties including the following examples:

- a) Assist with program development and assessment.
- b) Recruitment functions.
- c) Planning and participating in special events.
- d) Providing guidance to undergraduate organizations.
- e) Assist with public relations.
- f) General administrative support functions.

### **III. PLANNING**

## **Time Commitment**

Full-time Graduate Assistants are required to work 20 hours per week. Students must be enrolled in at least 6 credits.\*

Part-time Graduate Assistants are required to work 10 hours per week. Students must be enrolled in at least 3 credits.\*

Enrollment hours are verified by the Graduate School each semester.

\* Students seeking financial aid must meet established enrollment requirements. Masters students must be enrolled in at least 5 hours to receive half-time aid. To be considered for full-time financial aid students must be enrolled in nine credits.

Doctoral students must be enrolled in at least 3 hours to receive half-time aid. To be considered for full-time financial aid students must be enrolled in six credits.

## **Time Restraints**

Fall and Spring Semesters

- a) Students may not exceed 25 hours per week in totality for all campus jobs.
- b) Domestic students who wish to hold a position on campus beyond their graduate assistantship .59 TmeW9ut2.024 512.35 Tm02W\* n610t271.970912 0 612 792 reW\* nBT/F2 12 Tf



- c) The 40-hour period for summer will generally begin on the first day of the pay period immediately following Memorial Day and will end 12 weeks later.
- d) If students do work over 40 hours in a pay week (Thu-Wed), the student must be paid overtime. Supervisors are not permitted to move time worked in a paid status or adjust time worked in a paid status to another payroll period



Students who plan to leave Salisbury University will be asked to return all materials and property prior to leaving campus. Items to include, but not limited to:

Parking Permit

GullCard

Property Keys

Laptop

Other items determined by supervisor and/or the Graduate School.

## **VI. BENEFITS**

### **Stipend**

Full-time GAs - The current minimum stipend is \$4,635 per fall and spring semesters.

Part-time GAs - The current minimum stipend is \$2,317.50 per fall and spring semesters.

Departments may opt to pay more based on job duties and departmental budget allowance.

### **Tuition Waivers**

Full-time GAs - Earn a guaranteed tuition waiver of nine (9) credit hours (paid at standard, in-state rate) per fall and spring semesters.

Part-time GAs - Earn a guaranteed tuition waiver of 4.5 credit hours (paid at standard, in-state rate) per fall and spring semesters.

Students are eligible for a tuition waiver (paid at the standard in-state rate) in the semester in which employment begins. To receive a waiver during winter or summer sessions, student must have been employed in the preceding semester and not have exceeded their 18 guaranteed credits.



## **Parking**

- Serious medical or mental health conditions; and
- Other circumstances as approved at the discretion of the faculty member (e.g., natural disasters that prevent safe travel).

## **Dress Code**

Graduate Assistants working within an office setting are expected to dress in a business casual manner. Graduate Assistants working in other areas should discuss appropriate dress with the hiring supervisor.

## **Conduct**

Salisbury University is committed to creating a campus climate that is respectful and in accordance to the laws of the State of Maryland. All employees, including Graduate Assistants, are expected to abide by university policies in regards to sexual misconduct, discrimination, and academic integrity. Any Graduate Assistant found in violation of these policies will face disciplinary action.

## **Confidentiality**

Graduate Assistants may have assigned job duties that require access to sensitive information. As such, Graduate Assistants are required to treat such information in a highly professional and confidential manner. Any student who is found in violation of this will face disciplinary action.

## **Supervisor Responsibilities**

Supervisor are responsible for providing a work schedule and list of job duties prior to the contract start date. Discussions regarding duties, work schedule and possible holidays should occur during the hiring process.

Supervisors are responsible for providing training and reviewing performance through evaluation. The type and/or method of evaluation is dependent upon job type and department. All evaluations, positive and negative, should be discussed with the GA.

## **Review/Evaluation**

USM Policy on Graduate Assistants encourages departments to provide feedback concerning performance in the assistantship. To assist you, a standard [evaluation form](#) is available on our website if needed. You do not have to replace any current evaluation tools with this form.

## **VIII. POLICIES**

The Office of Institutional Equity leads campus efforts to manage all aspects of the Fair Practices/AA programs, as well as Title IX compliance, and weaves the diversity strategy throughout the University, focusing on and impacting the needs of various constituencies: faculty, staff and students. See Appendix B for a list of all polices.

## **IX. GRADUATE ASSISTANT GRIEVANCE POLICY**

### **1. Overview**

The grievance policy will apply to disputes concerning:

- a) Workload volume and scheduling;
- b) Inappropriate work assignments;
- c) Termination of a graduate assistantship within the term of appointment; and
- d) Non-renewal of assistantship for arbitrary or capricious reasons including reprisal for filing a grievance.

The decision whether to renew an assistantship, except for the reason listed above, remains within the discretion of the department chair and is not subject to the grievance process. However, if a graduate assistant believes that an assistantship was not renewed because of unlawful discrimination or other unlawful grounds, the graduate assistant may pursue available institution processes.

Graduate assistants may raise concerns regarding suspected on-campus fraud or fiscal irregularities through the confidential University System of Maryland hot-line: 1-877-330-2320.

### **2. Procedures**

The University is an academic and collegial community. Regular and clear communication between GAs and their supervisors is essential to maintaining an effective educational environment. GAs who believe their work experience is not in conformity with the *Graduate Assistant Policy* may seek a review in accordance with this Section.

In all instances, the GA should attempt to resolve these matters locally, collegially, and informally. If the difficulty has not been resolved to the GA's satisfaction through informal means, then he or she may elect to file a formal grievance.

- a) **Informal Consultation:** The Graduate Assistant should first attempt to resolve any difficulty by discussing the situation with his or her supervisor as expeditiously as possible. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the GA should next discuss the situation with the Chair of the Department or follow "the chain of command" for the unit in which they are employed.
- b) **Formal Grievance:** Most problems related to assistantships are resolved through informal consultation. If a problem has not been solved informally to the GA's



If a satisfactory resolution has not been achieved following informal consideration, the GA may initiate a formal grievance by sending a letter to the Dean of her or his academic School or Vice President of the unit where he or she is employed, copying the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. To be considered, it must be received within 30 calendar days from the action involved or from the GA having reasonable knowledge of it. Under exceptional circumstances, that deadline may be extended. The letter must be signed and:

- a) Contain a clear description of the facts giving rise to the grievance; and,
- b) Be copied to the GAs supervisor
- c) Be Copied to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research
- d) Propose a solution

Upon the receipt of the letter, the unit head (Dean or Vice President) will render a decision, informing the GA, the supervisor and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research within 10 working days. If the GA finds the solution unacceptable, he or she may appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. This appeal must be sent within 10 working days of the unit head decision. The letter must clearly state why the proposed solution is unacceptable.

Upon receipt of a letter of formal grievance, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will offer to meet with the GA and the supervisor, either individually or together, before proceeding. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research may also consult with the unit head and other persons knowledgeable about the policies and practices involved. If no solution (agreeable to all parties) can be reached through these discussions within 10 working days, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research shall refer the matter to a Graduate Appeals Panel. If a solution is reached, a letter detailing the solution will be sent to all parties.

The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research shall appoint a Graduate Appeals Panel consisting of two graduate faculty (one of whom shall chair the panel) one graduate student, and as appropriate, an HR representative to review the matter and make a recommendation. Neither the faculty nor the graduate student appointed to the Panel will be from the department or unit involved in the grievance. Either party to the grievance may request that a panel member be substituted on the grounds that the panel member has a conflict of interest. Additionally, if the grievance involves the office of Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, the Dean shall remove himself/herself from the proceedings and the Provost shall appoint someone to oversee the process. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will provide the panel with the letter of formal grievance and the written response(s). The panel shall offer to meet with the GA and the supervisor.

This Panel shall endeavor to convey a written decision and, where appropriate, the







## APPENDIX B

### Policies

USM Policy on Graduate Assistantships

<http://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionIII/III711.pdf>

#### **Conduct Policies**

- Salisbury University Policy Prohibiting Sexual Misconduct and Other Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination
- Salisbury University Policy Prohibiting Non-Sex Based Discrimination
- USM Policy on Sexual Misconduct
- Salisbury University's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Statement
- Salisbury University's Title IX Statement

<https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/institutional-equity/document-library.aspx>

Procedures for Filing a Complaint

[https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/institutional-equity/report-a-\(USM\)§0 0 1 .34.06 15 redn.-16\(8m0 0 1](https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/institutional-equity/report-a-(USM)§0 0 1 .34.06 15 redn.-16(8m0 0 1)