

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

at Eastern Kentucky University



**AY 2024
/ 2025**



Faculty and Staff Guide

STUDENTS...

Welcome to the Graduate School at Eastern Kentucky University! Your desire to pursue graduate education places you in an elite minority. The attainment of a graduate degree requires a high degree of commitment, as well as academic ability. To aid in this noble pursuit, EKU is fortunate to have the resources to provide a select number of graduate assistantship (GA) positions to high-achieving graduate students. The GA experience can help students deepen educational experiences, obtain important work experience, and receive mentorship from faculty, staff, and professionals in the field.

HIRING OFFICIALS, FACULTY, and STAFF...

Thank you for your work at EKU in assisting our graduate students obtain GA positions. As you know, the cost of graduate school can be prohibitive to some students and the availability of graduate assistantships helps to ease some of that financial burden. Additionally, an assistantship can provide valuable experience in a student’s field that could lead to professional recommendations and future opportunities. EKU is fortunate that assistantships are valued by the administration, who are providing funding for approximately 140* assistantships this academic year (*not including assistantships funded by departments or external grants).

The purpose of this guide is to serve as a resource for graduate students, faculty, and staff on the many facets of an EKU GA position. While some questions may not be answered within these pages, many common topics are covered so please reference this guide before reaching out with questions. However, should you have any questions regarding GAs, please contact the EKU Graduate School at Grad.Assistant@eku.edu.

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A. GA ALLOCATIONS – GRADUATE SCHOOL FUNDED

Following the spring GA allocation process, each college dean and business unit were notified via email of their AY2024/2025 GA allocation that would be funded by the ECU Graduate School.

- **Hiring Officials/Chairs:** please contact your dean/associate dean or business unit head for more information on GA allocations if you have not already been notified.
- **Deans/Associate Deans/Unit Heads:** please contact the Dean of the Graduate School, [Dr. Ryan Baggett](#), if you have any questions regarding your ECU Graduate School-funded GA allocation.
- It is important to note that deans/unit heads are provided an overall GA allocation for their college/unit, and it is **their responsibility to distribute specific positions within specific departments/areas**. Deans and department heads can also decide if the positions will be full-time (FT) or half-time (HT), more information on this distinction is provided later in this guide.
- Many departments fund GA positions from their own departmental/externally funded budgets (in addition to ECU Graduate School funding). While the stipend and tuition funding will come from their own budgets, the hiring requirements and procedures identified within this guide will remain the same.

NOTE: Employment of GA positions over the specified college/unit allotment will be the financial responsibility of the college or unit!

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS (GA) AT EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

FINANCIAL ADVANTAGES

- Full-time GAs work 20 hours per week and receive the following benefits:
 - Six-credit hour graduate tuition waiver
 - \$5,600 stipend per semester
- Part-time GAs work 10 hours per week and receive the following benefits:
 - Three-credit hour graduate tuition waiver
 - \$2,800 stipend per semester



MINIMAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be enrolled in a Master's, Specialist, or Doctoral program at EKU.
- Must be enrolled in nine-graduate credit hours (or more) that are directly related to degree requirements.
- Must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 at all times.



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE ADVANTAGES

- GAs may engage in teaching activities under the supervision of a faculty member.
- GAs may work in a service capacity to grow their professional development and career opportunities.
- GAs may work alongside faculty on research projects.



IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- The Graduate School only funds assistantships during the fall & spring semesters.
- Students working as a GA over the summer must be funded by their department or grants.
- Students are eligible to hold assistantships for a maximum of four (4) semesters.



APPLY TODAY!

- Check out careers.eku.edu then go to the "Student and GA tab" and search for positions.
- Contact the Graduate Coordinator in the department you would like to work in for more information.
- Apply online when you find an available position of interest.



QUESTIONS?



Graduate School
Email: grad.assistant@eku.edu
Phone: 859-622-1744

Eastern Kentucky University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and Education Institution

FIGURE ONE: EKU GRADUATE ASSISTANT INFOGRAPHIC

B. GA SELECTION AND USE

While the allocated GA funding and logistical support is provided by the ECU Graduate School, GAs will be selected and supervised by the ECU academic departments and other business units. The candidates must meet the eligibility requirements presented in [Section C](#) of this guide, and assistantships should only be awarded to ECU's **strongest graduate students** who are enrolled full time. Additionally, GA positions should be used to **attract prospective graduate students** to departments with GA appointments being **directly related** to the student's program of study. Finally, it is the expectation of the ECU Graduate School that students on assistantship appointments **complete their degree requirements and graduate** within the normal two years of support (or longer in programs that require credit hours over 36) provided by the assistantship.

Further, GAs should be beneficial to both the graduate student and the department/unit. The department/unit receives assistance from the supported graduate student and the GA receives experience and mentorship in research, service, or teaching, which is intended to facilitate professional development. As a rule, GA duties should be limited to tasks that benefit both the academic unit and advance the professional development of the GA. It is imperative that the assistantship does not delay the student's progress towards the prompt and successful completion of the degree program. In no way should the assistantship interfere or conflict with the educational objectives of the student.

Examples of **inappropriate** duties for a GA may include, but are not limited to:

- Personal services for a supervisor
- Administrative work that does not advance professional development
- Maintaining the personal computer/email of a supervisor
- Non-ECU related tasks

Questions regarding the appropriateness of GA tasks can be directed towards the [Dean of the Graduate School](#).

Departments/units must provide an educational justification for ALL GA positions within the PENGUIN system (See [APPENDIX A](#)). Nominations that do not include an appropriate educational justification will not be approved. At ECU, the roles and responsibilities for GAs are generally in one of three categories:

1. Teaching (GAINST)
2. Research (GARESE)
3. Service (GASERV)

B1. Teaching

GA teaching assignments/assistance, laboratory oversight, and online facilitation must be conducted under the supervision of experienced faculty members as a means of developing teaching skills in the academic discipline. The final responsibility for the material covered, grades, and other formal course responsibilities remains with the supervising faculty member. Roles and responsibilities under this category may include, but are not limited to:

- Running undergraduate laboratories
- Assisting with the preparation of teaching materials and learning resources

- Grading class assignments (from a rubric or key under the supervision of the faculty member)
- Making presentations as part of a regular class session
- Leading/assisting with tutoring sessions
- Proctoring examinations

The following section will outline three specific teaching functions for GAs: Laboratory Instructors, Course Facilitators (through ECU Online), and Instructors of Record (rare).

B.1.1 GAs Serving as Laboratory Assistants

Graduate assistants may serve as laboratory assistants; **HOWEVER**, the required qualifications of the GA depend on their role in the laboratory.

Scenario One: The laboratory assistant's primary function is to supervise regular laboratory activities and ensure safety protocols are followed. The laboratory assistant may provide clarification and answer questions on the laboratory assignment that has been developed by the faculty or department but does NOT provide direct instruction for the course. In this scenario, any GA can serve in this capacity with the proper training.

Scenario Two: The laboratory assistant provides direct instruction for the course (knowledge, skills, abilities) while supervising regular laboratory activities and ensuring safety protocols are followed. GAs serving in scenario two **MUST BE QUALIFIED as a TEACHING ASSISTANT per SACSCOC and ECU requirements.**

EKU Academic Regulation 4.6.1ACR: Determining Qualifications for Faculty Teaching Credit Bearing Courses

Section E. Teaching Assistants (Including Instructor of Record)

Teaching assistants who are the instructor of record for a developmental course must meet the qualification guidelines in Section A above; for all other undergraduate courses or laboratories that bear credit, teaching assistants who are the instructor of record must have at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching or related discipline or, for physical activity courses, must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree plus certification in the activity, experience in teaching/ coaching/ playing in the discipline, or both. Additionally, all teaching assistants who are the instructor of record must be under the direct, documented supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, participate in regular in-service training, and be subject to planned and periodic evaluations. View the full policy: [EKU Academic Regulation 4.6.1ACR](#)

A full-time GA may be assigned a maximum of three 100-level (1 hour) laboratories during the semester. Half-time GAs may only be assigned one 100-level (1 hour) laboratory during the semester. These restrictions consider instruction time during the lab, additional student contact time, weekly planning meetings, as well as 2-3 hours each week of grading and preparation time.

B.1.2 GAs Serving as Online Course Facilitators (EKU Online)

Graduate assistants may serve as facilitators for EKU Online Courses; HOWEVER, **GAs serving in these capacities MUST BE QUALIFIED AS SECONDARY INSTRUCTORS** (which applies only to EKU Online) per SACSCOC and EKU requirements:

EKU Academic Regulation 4.6.1ACR: Determining Qualifications for Faculty Teaching Credit Bearing Courses

Section D. Secondary Instructors for Courses (Applies only to EKU Online Courses)

Faculty not designated as primary instructors must have at least 18 graduate hours in the teaching discipline or hold a bachelor's degree in the teaching or related discipline. Responsibilities of the secondary instructor must be clearly documented but must not include sole responsibility for curriculum/course development or for evaluation of students. Secondary instructors must be under the direct, documented supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline and be subject to planned and periodic evaluations. View the full policy: [EKU Academic Regulation 4.6.1ACR](#).

Faculty/departments are strongly encouraged to work closely with the [EKU Online Business Operations Office](#) regarding facilitator assignments using the guidelines below.

Due to federal work study guidelines which prohibit graduate assistants from working more than 20 hours per week, there are limitations on the number of courses a GA can facilitate per term:

GA Status	Course Facilitation Allowance (in-load as part of the assistantship)	Additional Course Facilitation Eligibility
Full-Time (20 hours per week)	One 8-week course during Term A One 8-week course during Term B	NONE
Part-Time (10 hours per week)	One 8-week course (Term A or B)	One (MUST submit Additional Employment Request form)

All courses will follow the facilitator thresholds set forth in EKU Online guidelines. Additionally, supervisors are expected to work closely with their GAs to clearly communicate workloads (specifically full-time GAs) to determine if additional time is available each week (in addition to the course facilitation) for other academic tasks. This workload communication is also applicable for part-time GAs during the eight weeks in which they are not facilitating a course. It is essential that EKU provides quality experiences for GAs during their required weekly hours. It is also important to understand that a GA's primary responsibility at EKU is to focus on the completion of their graduate degree.

B.1.2.1 PROCESS: Hiring a GA for Online Course Facilitation Only (EKU Online)

1. **HIRE** the GA as outlined in [Section F](#) of this guide.

If the GA is being hired for online course facilitation **only**, ensure the following at the interview stage (prior to hiring):

- Ensure the GA meets the necessary qualifications/experience to serve as an Online Course Facilitator – see policy 4.6.1. on preceding page.

AND

- Discuss roles and responsibilities with the GA and the course Instructor of Record to ensure there is a willingness/good fit.
2. The department chair will **submit the [Online Facilitator Request](#)** form for any GA who will be serving as an online course facilitator (see example in figure two).

Online Course Facilitator Request

Ryan Baggett (ryan.baggett@eku.edu)
Not Ryan Baggett? [Click here](#) Log Out

*To request a graduate student to facilitate a course, please complete this form in its entirety.
The academic department is solely responsible for hiring faculty, verifying credentials and assigning faculty in courses they are qualified to teach, consistent with SACSCOC requirements.*

Hiring Official Information

First Name: Ryan
Last Name: Baggett
Email: ryan.baggett@eku.edu
Department: _____

Facilitator Information

Facilitator ECU ID: _____
First Name of Request Facilitator: _____
Last Name of Request Facilitator: _____
Facilitator Email: _____
Facilitator Department: _____
What course will the student be facilitating?: _____

To be eligible, facilitators must have:

- a) Status that would be approved by SACSCOC for secondary instructor purposes.
 - Graduate Level: earned their Master's degree in a field of study appropriate to the course content.
 - Undergraduate: earned their Bachelor's degree in a field of study appropriate to the course content OR have at least 18 graduate hours in the teaching discipline.

Most programs require a Master's level or above as standard practice.

Does this student meet the academic requirement to serve as a course facilitator?

Yes
 No
 Unsure

Is this student currently a graduate assistant?

Yes
 No
 Unsure

Are course facilitation duties part of the GA's current job assignment?

Yes
 No

Submit

FIGURE TWO: GRADUATE STUDENT ONLINE FACILITATOR REQUEST FORM

B.1.2.2 PROCESS: Hiring a Part-Time GA for Online Course Facilitation – NOT part of their GA Duties (EKU Online)

If the department anticipates the graduate student will serve as an online course facilitator outside of their assistantship:

A) The department chair will submit the [Online Facilitator Request](#) form for the GA who will be serving as an online course facilitator.

Rationale: This step allows the graduate school/financial aid to ensure that the student qualifies for an additional assignment per graduate school regulations and that the extra income will not jeopardize any financial aid received. This also allows Human Resources (HR) to update the student's compensation for additional employment.

B) Actions taken in step A above will produce a DocuSign form routed to approve the facilitator appointment. The form must be signed.

Rationale: This step allows for a credential review of the GA and serves as the official clearance for the respective dean's office to list the GA as part-time faculty. GAs must be listed in the faculty file for the scheduler to add them to CourseLeaf™. They must be added to CourseLeaf™ to roll into the Blackboard™ course shell and listed as a facilitator/instructor.

NOTE: Full-time GAs are NOT authorized to serve as online course facilitators outside of their assistantship per federal work study laws. Half-time GAs will be allowed to serve as an online course facilitator for one course.

B.1.2.3 PROCESS: Hiring a Graduate Student (NON-GA) for Online Course Facilitation (EKU Online)

If the department anticipates the graduate student will serve as an online course facilitator and the graduate student does not have an assistantship:

A) The graduate student will apply for a course facilitator position on the ECU Human Resources Online Employment System (OES) (hr.eku.edu/employment).

Rationale: This step allows HR to officially hire the student as an ECU employee and ensure the University is in compliance with federal work laws.

B) The department chair will submit the [Online Facilitator Request](#) form for the GA who will be serving as an online course facilitator.

Rationale: This step allows for a credential review of the GA and serves as the official clearance for the respective dean's office to list them as part-time faculty. GAs must be listed in the faculty file for the departmental scheduler to add them to CourseLeaf™.

C) Actions taken in steps A and B will produce a DocuSign form routed to approve the Facilitator appointment. The form must be signed.

Rationale: This step allows for a credential review of the GA and serves as the official clearance for the respective dean's office to list them as part-time faculty. GAs must be listed in the faculty

file for the scheduler to add them to CourseLeaf™. They must be added to CourseLeaf™ to roll into the Blackboard™ course shell and listed as a facilitator/instructor.

Once approved by HR, non-GA students will receive a contract for the assignment.

B.1.3 GAs Serving as Instructors of Record

On extremely rare occasions (due to necessary qualifications), graduate assistants may serve as instructors of record (IOR) for undergraduate courses; HOWEVER, **GAs serving in these capacities MUST BE QUALIFIED** with the following:

Doctoral/terminal or master's degree in the teaching discipline or in a related field or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).

The exception (per the policy below) is in physical activity courses, which require:

A minimum of a bachelor's degree plus certification in the activity, experience in teaching/coaching/ playing in the discipline, or both is required.

EKU Academic Regulation 4.6.1ACR: Determining Qualifications for Faculty Teaching Credit Bearing Courses

Section B. Faculty Teaching Undergraduate Degree Courses

Faculty teaching undergraduate courses, including general education courses, must hold a doctoral/terminal or master's degree in the teaching discipline or in a related field or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline). For physical activity courses, a minimum of a bachelor's degree plus certification in the activity, experience in teaching/coaching/playing in the discipline, or both is required. For faculty teaching clinical, practicum, studio or internship courses must hold at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline and must have certification/licensure or demonstrated clinical/practice leadership in a specialization relevant to the course content. View the full policy: [EKU Academic Regulation 4.6.1ACR](#).

- A **full-time GA** who meets the criteria noted above, may teach a total of three (3) credit hours each semester under their assistantship.
- A **half-time GA** who meets the criteria noted above, may only be assigned one credit hour per semester as an IOR.

B2. Research

A GA's participation in research is beneficial to both the faculty and student. Faculty are encouraged to include GA lines in external funding proposals to facilitate further opportunities. GAs in this category gain the experience of working alongside faculty members on research projects with roles and responsibilities to include, but not limited to:

- Collecting, coding, and/or analyzing data
- Conducting scientific tests and observations

- Conducting surveys and/or focus group research
- Conducting literature reviews or library research
- Preparing materials for submission to funding agencies and foundations
- Writing reports
- Preparing materials for Institutional Review Board review

B3. Service

Departments and units are encouraged to think creatively about using GAs in service roles that provide professional development and career advancement opportunities. These GAs may have roles and responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- Program development/outreach
- Creating digital/print materials and guides
- Serving on various committees as a student representative

C. GA REQUIREMENTS and ELIGIBILITY

As previously noted, there are a limited number of very competitive assistantships available at EKU (100% online graduate students are eligible for assistantships if they live in the Richmond, KY area and are available to come to campus). The positions are reserved for high performing students who can successfully balance their graduate education (primary role at EKU) and contribute to the department/unit in which their assistantship is housed. Please see the list of requirements below that **every** GA must meet:

- **Admission into an EKU Graduate Degree Program:** GAs must be clearly or provisionally admitted into a master's or doctoral degree program at Eastern Kentucky University.
- **Full-Time Enrollment in a Graduate Degree Program:** GAs must be registered for a minimum of nine (9) credit hours of graduate courses. Enrollment in undergraduate courses may not be used to meet the full-time enrollment requirement unless the undergraduate courses have been specifically identified at the time of admission as required to meet program prerequisites. GAs are expected to enroll only in course work directly related to the completion of their degree requirements.
- **Graduate GPA Requirement:** GAs must maintain a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 at ALL TIMES.
- **Academic Overloads:** Because of the demands of an assistantship appointment and that of full-time enrollment in a rigorous graduate degree program, academic overloads (more than 12 graduate hours/term) are not permitted for students holding a full-time graduate assistantship.
- **International Students** awarded teaching assistantships must demonstrate fluency and command of the English language.
- **One Time Exception to Nine Credit Hours Per Semester Requirement:** A one-time credit hour exemption may be made by the Graduate School for GAs in their last semester of GA eligibility (fourth semester of serving as a GA) and graduating at the end of that semester. During their fourth semester, the GA will be allowed to take six (6) credit hours instead of nine (9) if taking only six hours will fulfill the hours required for completion of their graduate program. This exception will assist those who will be graduating in the fourth semester of their assistantship and enrolling of nine hours would be unnecessary to fulfill degree requirements. Students

seeking an exception to full-time enrollment should submit the [Graduate Assistantship Exception to Full-Time Enrollment Request](#) form.

Students NOT eligible for graduate assistantships:

- Students enrolled as non-degree, certification, or rank only programs are NOT eligible for graduate assistantships.
- Students who have probationary admission status or who are on academic probation may NOT hold an assistantship until they have met the requirements for clear admission to the program.
- Undergraduate students are NOT eligible to hold appointments.

D. GA STANDARDS OF CONDUCT / ETHICS

GAs are part-time employees of Eastern Kentucky University and are subject to the standards of conduct noted in the [EKU Staff Handbook](#). GAs should be familiar with applicable policies, regulations, and benefits to include academic regulations of the ECU Graduate School (published in the Graduate Catalog under Section 4) and any regulations/requirements of their respective department or program.

Additionally, a GA agrees to abide by all University rules and regulations pertaining to students, and to maintain satisfactory progress toward their degree. In the event of a violation of such rules and regulations, any assistantship can be terminated at the option of the University. Acceptance of the assistantship is construed as acceptance of the foregoing conditions.

Other notes regarding conduct and ethics:

- GAs have a professional role in their capacity at ECU. All GAs are subject in their teaching and research activities to the ethical precepts and code of the academic profession.
- Assistantships are offered by the University to qualified graduate students as enabling devices for graduate study. As a condition of appointment, each GA is expected to perform certain instructional and/or other professional services for the University.
- A GA agrees to abide by all University rules and regulations pertaining to students, and to maintain satisfactory progress toward their degree.
- In the event of a violation of such rules and regulations, any assistantship can be terminated at the option of the University.
- GAs are encouraged to contact their supervisor or the ECU Graduate School with any questions regarding policies and/or procedures related to their assistantship.

E. GA STIPENDS, TUITION WAIVERS and WORK HOURS

E1. GA STIPENDS

- The **academic** yearly GA stipend (fall and spring semesters) is \$11,200 for full-time GAs and \$5,600 for half-time GAs for the '24-25 Academic Year. Therefore, **semester** stipends are \$5,600 for full-time GAs and \$2,800 for half-time GAs for the '24-25 Academic Year.
- GA stipends are paid in semi-monthly paychecks on the 15th and 30th of every month.
 - For the **fall** semester, the first check will be direct-deposited on 30 AUG 24 and the last check on 13 DEC 24 for a total of eight (8) paychecks.

- For the **spring** semester, the first check will be direct-deposited on 31 JAN 25 and the last check on 15 MAY 25 for a total of eight (8) paychecks.
- Should there be a delay in adding a GA to payroll, causing the student not to receive their first paycheck, the stipend will be pro-rated over the remaining pay periods.
- Hiring officials, please review all stipend levels to make sure they are correct before submitting nominations into PENGUIN.

E2. GA PARTIAL TUITION WAIVERS

- **Full-time GAs** will be granted a tuition waiver of **six (6) credit hours** of graduate tuition.
- **Half-time GAs** will be granted a tuition waiver of **three (3) credit hours** of graduate tuition.

When entering the GA into the PENGUIN system, please enter the appropriate tuition waiver amount for that student. This amount is based on the student’s degree program and resident or non-resident status (on some degrees). Please see the table in [Appendix C](#) for 2024/2025 amounts.

NOTE: In cases where GA positions are supported by grants, departmental, or other funds, the funding source is required to provide the tuition waiver AND the stipend. Grants/departments that are unable to provide funding for the tuition waiver should consider hiring graduate students as a graduate level institutional student worker through ECU HR, as opposed to graduate assistants. Reach out to your ECU HR consultant for more information.

E3. GA WORK HOURS

- Graduate assistants are expected to begin working the first week of classes and continue working through finals week (16 weeks of work).
- Communication between the supervisor and GA is essential in balancing the needs of the GA with the needs of the department/unit. This communication should begin before the GA is hired to manage expectations on both sides.
- Full-time (FT) GAs are expected to work **20 hours each week**, while half time (HT) GAs work **10 hours per week**. It is required that GAs work these hours each week and it is very important to maintain the balance of hours to ensure student success. However, the supervisor and GA can discuss slight variations depending on student/department needs. Again, communication is essential, and variations of the set schedule must be agreed upon by both parties.
- Although the university does not require a timecard, supervisors may require a time-keeping tool for GAs.

F. TIMELINE AND PROCESS FOR GA EMPLOYMENT

F1. EMPLOYMENT PROCESSING TIMELINE – HIRING OFFICIALS

Using the process outlined in this section, the following timeline is strongly encouraged to prevent missed payments for GAs. **GAs may not begin working until HR has cleared them.**

FALL Semester:

Step #	Step	Complete by
1	Post NEW GA Job Description in HR OES	July 1
1A	Interview Potential GAs	Mid July

2	Enter the NEW or RENEWAL GA into PENGUIN	August 1
3	Qualifications Verified by EKU Graduate School	1 st week of August
4	Processed by EKU HR	1 st and 2 nd week of August

NOTE: Please submit all GA nominations through the PENGUIN system **on or before the dates noted in the tables**, allowing the workflow to reach the EKU Graduate School before the first week of courses. The EKU Graduate School will continue to process GAs until the middle of the semester, but after the second week of classes, both the stipend and tuition waiver are prorated. **GA vacancies will not be filled after the middle of the semester (week eight).**

SPRING Semester:

Step #	Step	Complete by
1	Post NEW GA Job Description in HR OES	Mid November
1A	Interview Potential GAs	Mid December
2	Enter the NEW or RENEWAL GA into PENGUIN	January 6
3	Qualifications Verified by EKU Graduate School	2 nd week of January
4	Processed by EKU HR	2 nd week of January

F2. EKU GA EMPLOYMENT PROCESS- STUDENTS

NOTE FOR INTERESTED GRADUATE STUDENTS: Students interested in a GA position at EKU are encouraged to take these initial steps:

1. Contact the department for which they are interested in working to obtain detailed information on available assistantships and how to apply. These contacts will likely be directed to the hiring official/department graduate coordinators. (The EKU website hosts a directory of [graduate program coordinators](#).)
2. Search available GA postings by visiting EKU Human Resource’s Employment page (careers.eku.edu) and clicking on “Student/GAs” tab. Students can apply directly for the position, via the website.

AT-A-GLANCE: GA HIRING PROCESS (Student Perspective)

1. Interested students (who meet the requirements in [Section C](#)) complete an application via the HR website to start the hiring process and submit their information for a background check.
2. Students can expect an interview from departments/units that have interest in employing them for a GA position.
3. If the department/unit desires to employ the student, they submit a nomination in the PENGUIN system (EKU’s student employment system).
4. In the PENGUIN system, the nomination must be approved by the chair/department head of the work assignment followed by the college dean/unit head.
5. Once approved by all parties, the EKU Graduate School verifies the students’ eligibility and forwards the nomination to HR through the PENGUIN system.
6. HR confirms the student is set up as an EKU employee and adds the student to payroll.

7. After all approvals are confirmed, the scholarship office will post the GA's tuition waiver to the student's account.

F3. ECU GA EMPLOYMENT PROCESS- HIRING OFFICIALS

The ECU Graduate School and Office of Human Resources have implemented the following electronic process for approval of all graduate assistantships. Please follow these procedures:

1. ALL NEW GA positions must be posted through the ECU Human Resources Online Employment System (OES).
 - Posting the position in the online system provides a position number and background information on candidates applying for the position.
 - Please see the [ECU Human Resources Student Employment Services](#) webpage for more information.
 - This process expedites the background check and activates the student in payroll for the semester. For help using this system contact HR at 622-8046.

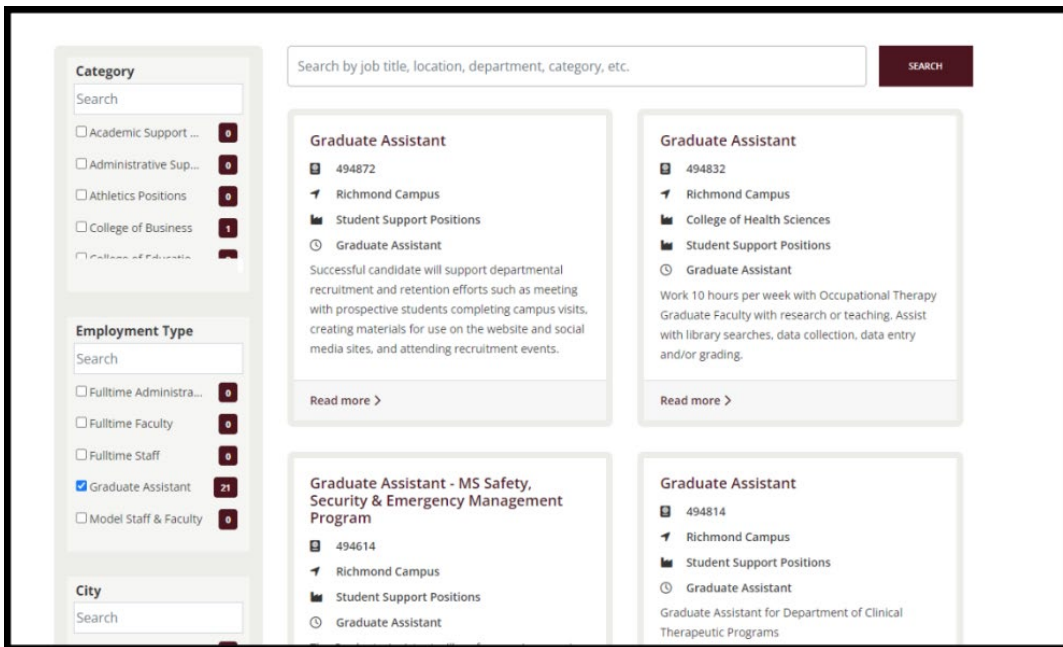


FIGURE 3: AVAILABLE GA POSITIONS IN ONLINE EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

EKU Home Why ECU Diversity & Inclusion Benefits

Graduate Assistant

494872

Richmond Campus

Student Support Positions

Graduate Assistant

Closing at: Sep 12 2023 at 23:55 EDT

★ ADD TO FAVORITES

👁 VIEW FAVORITES

Title: Graduate Assistant

Position Type: Graduate Assistant

Search Type: External - minimum 7 days

Department: 24R000 - College of Health Sciences

Division: 2R0000 - Academic Affairs

Position Location: Richmond Campus

Driver Classification: Non-Driver

Hours Per Week: 20

Retirement: None

Contact Person: Tammy Hogue

Job Summary/Basic Functions

Graduate Assistants may participate in teaching activities under the supervision of an experienced faculty member. This may include assisting with the preparation of teaching materials, holding office hours, grading assignments, proctoring examinations, or tutoring.

Graduate Assistants may work in a service capacity that will provide professional development and career advancement opportunities. Successful candidate will support departmental recruitment and retention

FIGURE 4: GA POSITION POSTING IN ONLINE EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

2. Enter the GA nomination in the Pogatshnik Employment for Graduate and Undergraduate Information Network (PENGUIN) System. See [APPENDIX A](#) for detailed PENGUIN instructions
3. ECU Graduate School Verification: Following the data entry nomination into the PENGUIN system by the hiring official, the subsequent approval by the chair/department head of the work assignment, and the college dean/unit head, the ECU Graduate School verifies the student's eligibility and forwards the nomination to ECU HR.
4. Hiring/Nomination Process:
 - ECU HR confirms the student is set up as an ECU employee and adds the student to payroll.
 - After all approvals are confirmed, the Scholarship Office will post the GA's tuition waiver.

NOTE: Graduate assistants MUST NOT begin working until they have been officially approved by ECU HR for the appointment through email notification. Additionally, the ECU Graduate School regularly reviews the records of GAs to determine their continued eligibility for GA employment.

G. GA RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS – BEFORE EACH SEMESTER

IMPORTANT: Hiring Officials must enter renewals each semester in the PENGUIN system for the continued assignment of their existing GA. An assessment process should also be implemented such as the one highlighted in [Section I](#) of this guide. Evaluations help the GA understand why their position was not renewed or what can be improved upon in future semesters.

IMPORTANT: Students, please note that the obtainment of a GA position does not necessarily ensure the position throughout a student's graduate school experience. GA positions are appointed on a semester-by-semester basis with the possibility of renewal if the requirements below are met.

As previously noted, it is the expectation of the ECU Graduate School that students on assistantship appointments **complete their degree requirements and graduate** within the normal two (2) years of support provided by the assistantship.

- In programs that require **less than 40 hours** for completion, a GA may hold an assistantship appointment for a maximum of two academic years (**four semesters**) not including summer semesters.
- In programs that require **more than 40 hours** for completion, a GA may hold an assistantship appointment for a maximum of three academic years (**six semesters**) not including summer semesters.

Continuation of the assistantship is contingent upon the following:

- Satisfactory progress toward the degree
- Maintaining a 3.0 or better cumulative GPA
- Maintaining full-time enrollment status (minimum of nine graduate hours), and
- Fulfillment of duties as determined in the assistantship appointment/ favorable evaluations

H. GA ASSESSMENT

It is strongly encouraged that faculty/staff supervisors discuss GA roles and responsibilities, expectations, and other requirements with their GA at the start of each semester and maintain the dialog throughout the semester. This discussion should include an estimate on how many hours should be spent each week on specific tasks. These tasks should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Additionally, supervisors should implement a formative evaluation process whereby deficiencies are identified when they happen and are communicated with the GA.

The evaluation process is a crucial part of the Graduate Assistantship Program. Supervision and performance reviews should be an ongoing process of communication between the GA and the supervisor. However, it is strongly encouraged that **at least one formal written evaluation** at the end of each semester be conducted between the supervisor and GA.

A finalized copy of the evaluation should be provided to the GA, with a copy of the evaluation maintained by the supervisor and department chair/unit head for a period of three years. The graduate school does not require a copy of the evaluation and will only request the evaluation if a problem arises.

The assessment should take the following criteria into account:

- Prompt, efficient, and accurate completion of assigned tasks and independent work
- Analysis and problem solving
- Adequate evaluations by students for instructional and tutoring assignments in courses, laboratory, and clinical settings
- Cooperation with mentor, director, and other assistants
- Professional and ethical behavior in all assigned tasks and duties, including course studies and research

For convenience, a simple assessment form has been provided in [APPENDIX B](#). Supervisors can utilize this tool or create their own with more specifics. **In the end, GAs must be afforded the opportunity to better understand their performance that will undoubtedly aid in their own professional development and hone essential skills necessary in their careers.**

I. HIRING RELATED LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

I.1 Tax Information for Graduate Assistants

Upon approval of their nominations, NEW graduate assistants must provide evidence of employability, complete a background check, and submit an I-9 Form. Federal income tax and state income tax will be withheld from each payment. Graduate assistant benefits include worker's compensation coverage for illness or injury that is work related. Hospitalization, medical expense, and a portion of any lost wages is included in the coverage.

Tax information is provided by the Payroll Office. Additional information on current tax laws can be found on the IRS website. A helpful guide is Tax Information for American Scholars in the U.S. and Abroad, Publication 520, revised edition, published by the Department of the Treasury, IRS. You may obtain a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

I.2 Background Checks

Background checks are required of all graduate assistants. Students nominated for graduate assistantships must submit their information via the Human Resources Online Employment System to authorize initiation of the background check. Students are typically notified within 7 to 10 days of the background-screening outcome.

I.3 GA Academic Load

- Graduate assistants are expected to enroll only in course work directly related to the completion of their degree requirements.
- Students who withdraw from classes during the term and fall below the minimum number of hours will have their assistantship and GA financial support revoked immediately.

J. GA – REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL ECU EMPLOYMENT

GAs who have completed 18 or more graduate hours in their program with a GPA of 3.5 or higher, may be approved for additional paid university employment outside of the graduate assistantship assignment and hours. Students who are approved for additional employment should submit the [Graduate Assistantship Additional Employment Request](#) Form.

- Full-Time GAs (working 20 hours per week) can request up to 7.5 additional hours/week of on campus employment.
- Part-time GAs (working 10 hours per week) are permitted up to 10 additional hours of on campus employment.

Students should communicate with their GA supervisor before requesting additional employment. The work supervisor responsible for this request should include a clear rationale for additional employment. Permission to work additional hours is granted solely by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Adjunct Instruction as the IOR: Per the ECU staff guidelines, staff are permitted to teach or facilitate one course per semester. As a staff member of the university, those GAs meeting the requirements above will be allowed to teach or facilitate one course per semester (for additional compensation above their normal GA duties) by completing the request for additional employment form. As previously, only half time GAs are eligible for these duties due to federal work study guidelines. Graduate students must also meet [EKU Policy 4.6.1. – Determining Qualifications for Faculty Teaching Credit-Bearing Courses](#) to serve as the instructor of record for an ECU course.

NOTE: International students on student visas are limited to working a maximum of 20 hours/week.

K. GA CONFLICTS, RESIGNATIONS, AND TERMINATIONS

K.1 Conflicts

If problems or conflicts arise in the performance of duties, the GA should discuss the situation with their immediate supervisor. If the problem is not resolved at that level, then the problem should be taken through the following levels until a resolution is reached: the department head, the appropriate college dean, and then the Dean of the Graduate School.

K.2 Resignations

A GA who voluntarily resigns their employment with ECU gives up any rights of employment. In the event a GA voluntarily leaves employment, certain procedures and courtesies should be observed. To leave in “good standing,” GAs must give two weeks advance notice in writing. The termination date should be clearly noted in the written notification. **All resignations must be presented to the supervisor in writing with an immediate copy to the ECU Graduate School.** Employees must leave in “good standing” to be eligible for future employment with the University.

If the GA desires to resign an assistantship in one department to accept an assistantship in another department, the graduate assistant must obtain the written permission of the chairs of both departments. This information should be submitted to the ECU Graduate School contact before they can transition to another GA position.

K.2.1 Instructions for Processing GA Resignations

GAs **MUST** provide written notice of their resignation to the department and to the ECU Graduate School two weeks prior to their last day of work. A GA will be terminated with HR at the end of their last week of employment. The submitter must enter PENGUIN and select the terminate job option, selecting the GA’s last day, as indicated in their resignation letter. Their stipend and tuition waiver will be prorated by weeks worked.

K.2.2 Instructions for Replacing a Resigned GA Position

If the department wishes to hire a replacement GA, they may do so by making a new job posting in OES and indicating that the GA stipend and tuition waivers will be at a pro-rated amount based on weeks employed. Once the department selects a replacement GA, they must submit a nomination in PENGUIN. The “comments” box should contain a statement that this GA will be a replacement for the GA who resigned, nothing the GA who resigned by name. Without terminating the previous GA in PENGUIN, a new nomination will not be approved. The replacement GA will also receive a prorated stipend and tuition waiver. Replacement GAs may not begin work until they have been approved by HR. If approved by HR, they may start the week after the GA that resigned stopped working.

K.3 Terminations

The GA appointment may be terminated before expiration of the specified time under certain conditions to include the items below and items under immediate dismissal in the Staff Handbook:

1. Incompetence, inefficiency, or neglect of duty
2. Misconduct that is job-related
3. Delinquency in academic work
4. Moral turpitude
5. Financial exigency
6. Discontinuance of the work in which the appointment is made
7. Chronic physical or mental ailment or defect which interferes with the performance of required duties
8. Voluntary mutual agreement

Assistantships already awarded will be cancelled if the appointee's grade point average falls below the required minimum for retention. Graduate students must maintain a minimum of 3.0 GPA. Further, the GA must maintain a minimum of nine (9) hours in the semester or face position termination.

Assistantships are offered by the university to qualified graduate students as enabling devices for graduate study. As a condition of appointment, each GA is expected to perform certain instructional and/or other professional services for the university. A GA agrees to abide by all university rules and regulations pertaining to students, and to maintain satisfactory progress toward their degree. In the event of a violation of such rules and regulations, any assistantship can be terminated at the option of the university. Acceptance of the assistantship is construed as acceptance of the foregoing conditions.

Graduate School funded GA positions with resignations or terminations after week eight of the semester will not be filled until the next semester.

L. GA ABSENCES (Sick, Vacation, and Closings)

Graduate Assistants **DO NOT** accrue sick or vacation hours. Therefore, they are expected to work their allocated hours each week. However, in the event of sickness, ECU holidays and closings, the following guidance is provided.

L.1 Sick Leave and Absences from Work Assignments

Unexpected Illness: GAs must communicate promptly with their supervisors in the event of sickness. Unless incapacitated or unable for some other reason, this communication should occur before the start of the GAs work hours. The GA and supervisor will develop a plan for making up the missed hours.

Courses: For those who serve as a teaching assistant, the general policy of the university is that all classes/laboratory will meet as scheduled. No GA has the individual authority to cancel classes. The same process applies for teaching assistant GAs in an effort for the department to obtain a replacement for the missed course/laboratory.

Anticipated Absences: If a student will be attending a conference or other related future event with known dates and times, GAs must request approval and propose a plan for their work assignment to be met through the GA supervisor.

L.1.2 Vacation and University Closings

GAs **ARE NOT** eligible to accrue vacation time; however, GAs are **entitled to the same legal holidays and breaks between terms as other University academic personnel**. If their assistance is required by faculty supervisors during such periods, arrangements should be made to compensate them by relief from duties, when necessary, during subsequent periods.

Scheduled Closings: Notices of official closings and holidays are in the university calendar (schedule of classes) or provided through official channels.

Emergency or Unscheduled Closings: GAs are not required to make up hours missed during emergency or unscheduled closings.

M. GA SUMMER TERM- FAQs

How many summer graduate credit hours does a graduate student need to be enrolled in to work as a graduate assistant in the summer?

A graduate student must be enrolled full time to be eligible for a graduate assistantship. Full-time status is a minimum of 9 (nine) graduate credit hours according to the [EKU Graduate Catalog 2024/2025](#).

In addition to being enrolled in nine (9) credit hours, are there other requirements for summer GAs?

As is the case in the fall and spring semesters, a graduate student must:

- Maintain a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 at all times
- Be clearly or provisionally admitted into an EKU master's or doctoral degree program (no probationary admissions and no non-degree, certification, or rank only students).

Who funds the Summer Assistantship?

The EKU Graduate School **does not** fund assistantships in the summer. It is the responsibility of the office in which they are employed to provide funding for the stipend and the six hour tuition waiver (see amounts on the next page).

Are there other employment opportunities for graduate students not enrolled in nine (9) credit hours?

Yes, graduate students can be employed as a student worker in the summer (as opportunities are available) by working with ECU HR: [Student Employment Services | Human Resources | Eastern Kentucky University \(eku.edu\)](#). This option does NOT include a tuition waiver.

What is the period of performance for a summer graduate assistant (how long will they work)?

The summer GA will work 12 weeks (the duration of the ECU summer semester), with a full-time (FT) GA working 20 hours per week and a half-time (HT) GA working 10 hours per week.

What is the stipend for a summer graduate assistantship (how much will a summer GA get paid)?

GAs will earn \$16.47 per hour during the summer term.

What is the process for hiring a graduate assistant for the summer?

It is the same process as fall and spring...

1. GA positions are posted on [Student Employment Services | Human Resources | Eastern Kentucky University \(eku.edu\)](#).
2. Once GA is hired through the OES system, the GA nomination is posted on [PENGUIN](#).
3. ECU HR confirms the student is set-up as an ECU employee and then the student may begin on the first day of the specific term.

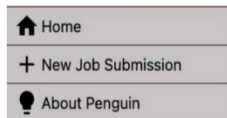
APPENDIX A:



Pogatschnik Employment for Graduate and Undergraduate Information Network (PENGUIN) System

How Do I Log Into the [PENGUIN](#) System?

Locate the three (3) options on the left toolbar (highlighted to show the option you are viewing):



- HOME: Main screen shows nomination status
- NEW JOB SUBMISSION: Set up a new nomination
- ABOUT PENGUIN: Learn more about the PENGUIN System

How Do I Set Up a GA Nomination?

1. Click on New Job Submission on the left toolbar.
2. Type in the required student information to search for the student and choose the semester.
3. Click on the name/EKU ID Number of the student for which you would like to create a new job.
4. Review the current Student Information and Financial Aid information.
5. In the yellow box, you will see the student employment types, choose one of graduate options:
 - GAINST = Graduate Assistant Instruction (Teaching)
 - GARESE = Graduate Assistant Research
 - GASERV = Graduate Assistant Service
6. Once you choose Position Type, you will see any previous or current student jobs.
 - To RENEW a previous or current position, click ON THE POSITION YOU WISH TO RENEW under Other Jobs.
 - To create a NEW position, scroll down to Department Orgn. and follow the prompts for the job information
 - Enter the Department Org Code of the department for which the student will work
 - Funding Source...choose from options in drop down
 - University Funded = Annual positions covered by university funding.
 - Department Funded = Positions funded specifically by the department for any positions that exceed the allotment for the AY.
 - Grant Funded = Positions that are funded exclusively through a grant contract.
 - Program...options autofill based on departmental options
 - Start and End Date are automatically populated
 - Approver/Position Supervisor is the individual who will be overseeing the GAs day to day tasks and assignments
 - Employment Type: Choose whether the GA will be Full-time (20 hours/week) or Half-time (10 hours/week)
 - Stipend Amount will be auto filled based on full or half-time selection
 - Educational Justification... enter specific GA functions in this area
 - Tuition Credit Hour Coverage should be entered with accordance to the position type (full-time/part-time)
 - Comments... enter any information approvers may need to know
 - Approval Queue... appears if all required information entered
 - Submit... moves nomination to next approver

EXAMPLE:

Term: 202510 - Fall 2024 Program: BBA in Finance Selected Position: GAINST - Graduate Assistant Instruction Credit Hours: 19	College: College of Business Department Orgn: 200100 - Graduate Studies GPA Eligibility: Eligible Funding Source: University Funded
---	--

Financial Aid Information

Federal: N	Award:
Remaining:	Institutional: Y
Federal Declined: N	Student Status: Fulltime

Enter all of the required fields (*)

Appointment Type: * Choose... Select New or Renewal if the GA is returning to their position	Job Title: * Enter the GA Position Title
Approver/Position Supervisor: * Choose... Enter the name of the student's reporting supervisor	
Start Date: * 08/13/2024	End Date: * 12/02/2024
Full-time or Half-time: * Full-time Select the students employment type	Stipend Amount: * Enter the stipend amount <small>Typical Stipend amount for fulltime: \$5600</small>
This student will be working for the funding department: * Yes	
Educational Justification: * Enter how the student's role as a GA will enrich their academic achievements and professional development.	
Tuition Waiver Amount: (For Scholarship Office only)	Total Tuition Hours Covered: Enter the tuition credit hours to be covered <small>Typical tuition hours for fulltime: 6</small>
Comments:	

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE GRADUATE ASSISTANT EVALUATION FORM

EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE ASSISTANT EVALUATION

Evaluated Semester: Fall OR Spring YEAR: _____

Graduate Assistant's (GA) Name: _____

GA's Department / Unit Assignment: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____

Notes/Directions: This form should be used to evaluate the performance of Graduate Assistants (GAs) each semester at EKU. The supervisor should answer the questions below, followed by a scheduled meeting with the GA to discuss the evaluation. The supervisor can also ask the GA to complete the form as a self-evaluation. If challenge or problem areas are identified and the GA assignment is expected to continue, a written corrective action plan should be provided. Copies of this evaluation (and the corrective action plan, if needed) should be provided to the GA and retained by the supervisor. Any questions should be directed to the Graduate School.

A) What were the GA's strengths over the past semester?

B) What were the GA's challenge areas over the past semester? Provide specific, detailed examples when possible.

C) If significant challenge areas exist, attach a separate page to this evaluation with the detailed challenges and a corrective action plan including the following:

- Describe the specific behaviors that the GA needs to change.
- Specify the timeline for expected changes.
- Indicate how the changes will be assessed. As appropriate, indicate any required record-keeping expected from the GA.
- Describe any resources that the GA may be able to use to facilitate the changes.
- Indicate the expected outcomes if the GA does or does not change their behaviors.

D) Rate the GA's overall performance over the past semester:

.....
Excellent Good Acceptable Below Average Poor

Renewal Action for Next Semester (circle one):

Retain/Renew GA _____ Discontinue GA Assignment _____ Student Graduates

Supervisor's Additional Comments:

The undersigned met and discussed this evaluation on: _____ (date)

GA Signature: _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____

APPENDIX C:

GA TUITION WAIVER AMOUNTS FOR AY 2024/2025:

eku.edu/studentaccounting/tuition-fees/graduate/