Graduate Assistantship Orientation

Fall 2015
Presenter

**Academic Human Resources**
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Types of Assistantships

Research Assistant
Primarily involve applying and mastering research concepts, practices, or methods of scholarship.

Pre-Professional Grad Assistant
Primarily gain experience, practice, or guidance that is significantly connected to their fields of study and career preparation

Teaching Assistant
Primarily in support of instruction

Administrative Grad Assistant
Support of administrative functions
Graduate Employees Organization (GEO)

Positions covered under the GEO Collective Bargaining Agreement

- Teaching Assistants (TA)
- Administrative Grad Assistants (GA)

Under the contract, 8 units require a TA experience; the first TA semester is exempt from the GEO

Positions not covered under the GEO Collective Bargaining Agreement

- Research Assistants (RA)
- Pre-Professional Grad Assistants (PGA)
Employees are not required to join the union

Employees are required to pay fair share fees when holding a covered position and electing not to join the union

Fair share and dues are paid via payroll deduction

Fair share and dues fees are determined by the GEO
  - Fair share is 2% of gross pay
  - Dues are 2% of gross pay when holding a covered position; $3/month when holding a non-covered position
Waiver Generating Assistantships

**Student Status**
Must be degree-seeking student in good standing in academic program

**Registration**
Required in Fall and Spring
May be required by academic program in Summer

**FTE**
Total Assistantship FTE 25 - 67%

**Duration**
¾ of academic term, defined as 91 days FA & SP, 41 Summer (Summer I TA only, 21 days)
Term = first day of classes through last day of finals
Information for International Students

50% FTE Maximum

May not work more than 20 hours/week (from all jobs) when classes are in session
May work additional hours in break periods when classes are not in session (usually hourly positions)

TA’s providing instruction must have demonstrated Oral English Proficiency to hold the appointment
What do you get with an Assistantship?

- Monthly Wages
- Tuition and fee coverage
- University paid dental insurance
- University paid vision insurance
- Sick leave
- Holidays
- Vacation (12 month assistantships only)
What is included in a waiver – generating appointment?

**Tuition**
- Waiver
- Base or full - type dependent on academic unit

[http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chaptervii/section04](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chaptervii/section04)

**Fees**
- 100% Health service fee – access to McKinley Health Center and Counseling Center
- 80% Health insurance fee
- Academic Facilities Maintenance Fund Assessment (AFMFA) fee
- Library/Technology fee
- Service fee
Total appointment limited to 67%
   Can have smaller percentage appointments, that aggregate to no more than 67%

Assistantships are professional level appointments, percent time is not rigidly equivalent to hours/week
   50% FTE assistant expected to provide an average of 20 hours/week over the course of the full appointment period

Administrative GA positions are FLSA non-exempt and must keep record of actual hours worked
   Electronic timesheet can be found on Nessie:
   http://www.hr.uillinois.edu/cms/One.aspx?portalId=964839&pageId=1060022
Paid monthly on the 16\textsuperscript{th} of each month

16\textsuperscript{th} = Saturday or Sunday, paid on Friday
Pay period is 16\textsuperscript{th} of month to 15\textsuperscript{th} of following month

Minimum rates for wages are set each year

GEO contract determines TA and GA minima
Campus administration sets RA and PGA minima
AHR monitors and ensures pay is at or above the minima
Units can have internal pay structures but must comply with campus and contract minima
Must be paid via direct deposit
New employees have 30 days to provide direct deposit information
Failure to provide banking information results in pay being provided via paycard

NESSIE
https://nessie.uihr.uillinois.edu
Compensation Tab
Provide bank information
Access earnings statements
Provide tax withholding information (W-4)
Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) determines whether a position/employee is eligible to be paid overtime.

TA’s, RA’s, and PGA’s are FLSA exempt and therefore not eligible to receive overtime compensation.

Administrative GA positions are non-exempt and eligible for overtime if more than 40 hours are worked in a single week.

Required to keep record of actual hours worked.
Electronic timesheet can be found on Nessie:
http://www.hr.uillinois.edu/cms/One.aspx?portalId=964839&pageId=1060022
McKinley Health Center
Office visits with doctors, nurse practitioners, mental health therapists and health educators, as well as most x-rays and laboratory tests at no additional out-of-pocket expense. Many immunizations and medications are offered at low cost or no cost.
May enroll non-minor dependents

Student Health Insurance
United Health Care is provider
Coverage period begins August 21, 2015
May enroll dependents
Enrollment period ends September 11, 2015
Student Health Insurance Office
1109 S. Lincoln Street, McKinley Health Center, Room 29, Urbana, IL
- Delta Dental is provider
  - Assistants automatically enrolled
    - Coverage period begins September 1, 2015
  - May enroll dependents
    - For Fall: Sept 1 – Sept 30, 2015
    - For Spring: Feb 1 – Feb 28, 2016

For more information and access to forms:
[http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current/dental.htm](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current/dental.htm)
EyeMed Vision Care is provider

Assistants automatically enrolled
Coverage period begins September 1, 2015
May enroll dependents
For fall: Sept 1 – Sept 30, 2015
For spring: Feb 1- Feb 28, 2016

For more information and access to forms:
http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current/vision.htm
**Paid Leave**

**Paid Sick leave**
- Maximum 13 non-cumulative days per year
- 6 ½ days for a semester appointment
- Days are equal to your “work day”, not set at 8 hours

**Paid Vacation**
- Eligible only if appointment is for 12 month duration
- 24 days per year (August 16 – August 15)
- Days are equal to your “work day”, not set at 8 hours
Bereavement Leave

Up to 3 days paid leave upon death of
  Immediate family
  Same-sex domestic partner
  Co-party w/ the assistant to a civil union
  Household member
  In-laws
  Grandparents and/or grandchildren

1 day paid leave upon death of
  Other relative than above who is not a member of your household
Other Leaves

Jury Duty
Paid release time for the duration of jury duty
May retain funds paid for jury duty compensation

Leave without Pay
May request an unpaid leave without pay
Approval at sole discretion of the University (except for parental accommodation period)

Military Leave
Granted in accordance with the Illinois Military Leave of Absence Act
Contact Academic HR if need arises
Parental Accommodation

The contract provides “Parental Accommodation” provisions.

Eligible assistants are entitled to up to six (6) weeks of parental accommodation period immediately following the birth of a child, or upon either the initial placement or the legal adoption of a child under 18 years of age.

The parental accommodation period may be comprised of a two week paid Parental Leave, use of paid sick leave in accordance with Article XVII, Section B of the contract, and a request of personal unpaid leave of absence.

If an assistant does not have enough paid sick leave to cover the six (6) weeks of parental accommodation, a request to make up the balance of the six week period with an unpaid leave of absence must be approved.
Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Must have 12 months of University employment
- Must have at least 1250 hours of service in the last 12 months
- Serious medical condition of self or immediate family member
- If eligible, FMLA provides 12 weeks of leave, leave not required to be paid
- Additionally, University Family Medical Leave (UFML) policy covers leave for the serious health condition of a civil union partner.

Worker’s Compensation
- Covered under the University’s plan
- On the job, accidental injuries
  - Report the accidental injury to your supervisor
  - Seek medical treatment
  - Complete the injury report form
2015-2016 University Holidays

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Day before Christmas Day
- Christmas Day
- Day before New Year’s Day
- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
Terms of Appointment

Offer letter

Can be email

Details

- FTE %
- Assistantship type, including noting if covered by GEO
- Wages
- Appointment dates (duration)
- Supervisor in the unit
- Major responsibilities of the position
Renewal of Appointments
  Unit determined
  Units encouraged to confirm plans as soon as known

Resignation
  Assistants required to give a minimum 14 day notice of resignation
  Written release from appointing unit if resignation is sought in order to accept a
different unit’s assistantship

Termination
  Failure to enroll, maintain academic eligibility or withdraws from University
  Disciplinary reasons following a prescribed process
Those Teaching Assistants (TA) or Research Assistants (RA) that receive a tuition and partial fee waiver as a result of their TA or RA appointment will typically not have their tuition and service fee waivers taxed.

University has a 127 plan, which is an educational assistance program that exempts the first $5,250 (per calendar year) of the tuition and service fee waivers.

Cumulative Graduate Assistant (GA) or Pre-Professional Graduate Assistant (PGA) tuition and service waivers in a calendar year exceeding $5,250 are considered taxable benefits.

Tuition and service fee waivers for Graduate Assistants (GA) and Pre-Professional Graduate Assistants (PGA) are considered taxable income if 51% or more of all of her/his assistantship appointments combined are either a GA or PGA.
Additional withholding from your paycheck for any value above the $5,250 limit.

Possibility of paycheck reduction. This will depend on the value of the tuition and service fee waiver and the pay the PGA or GA receives for the services they perform for the University.

**Effective January 1, 2012 federal income taxes withheld at graduated federal tax rates.** This change should reduce the amount of tax withholdings for the majority of affected students. The amount of decrease in tax withholdings for each student will vary significantly.

Taxability of Certain Assistantship Tuition and Service Fee Waivers:
http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/payroll/tuition-fee-waivers/

Monthly and Bi-weekly Tuition Benefit Net Pay Calculators
http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/payroll/
Internal Revenue Code – exception from FICA withholdings (Social Security and Medicare)

In general, the educational aspects of the relationship between the student and the University must be predominant over the service aspect, otherwise the student may be subject to FICA withholdings.

http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/payroll/tax-information/fica/student-employee-exception/

Registration status and possible impact:
- Part-time student status (less than half-time)
- Late registration
- Drop classes
Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA)

All University employees are required to complete education program and sign acknowledgement form.

Annual Ethics Training/Certification Requirement

All University employees are required by state law to successfully complete annual Ethics training by a state determined deadline. Pay careful attention to notices and deadlines; generally notified via email with unit staff responsible for monitoring completion.

Absences

Learn unit expectations for notification and coverage procedures.
Emergency Preparedness

Review the Campus Emergency Response Guide
- [http://www.dps.uiuc.edu/emergencyplanning/emergency.response.html](http://www.dps.uiuc.edu/emergencyplanning/emergency.response.html)

Enroll in Illini-Alert (Emergency Notification System) [http://emergency.illinois.edu](http://emergency.illinois.edu)
All @illinois.edu email addresses are automatically enrolled
Log in to [http://emergency.illinois.edu](http://emergency.illinois.edu) to add your cell phone number for text messages and a secondary email address

What to Do in An Emergency
Call 911 using any campus landline phone, a cell phone, or Lync* (it’s no longer necessary to dial the first 9 to get an outside line before dialing 911)
Refer to the Campus Emergency Response Guide
Academic Human Resources
- Terms of your appointment
- General employee relations concerns
- Pay issues
- Contact Information:
  Heather Horn, hwilson@illinois.edu or 333-0033

Office of Diversity, Equity and Access (ODEA)
Concerns about possible discrimination/harassment
  Sexual
  Gender
  Race
  Disability
  Age
Your Appointing Unit
   Best place to start with any question

Graduate College
   Academic program
   Tuition and fee waiver policies

Payroll Customer Service Office
   Tax or pay questions: UIUC (217) 265-6363 or paying@uillinois.edu

GEO (GAs and TAs)
   If holding a GEO covered position, the bargaining agreement provides a formal grievance procedure
Helpful Links

Academic Human Resources
http://www.ahr.illinois.edu/grads/index.html

Graduate College
http://www.grad.illinois.edu/

Graduate Handbook
http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook
  ▪ Tuition Waivers
  ▪ Campus Assistantship Policies
Helpful Links

Office of the Registrar
Fee Assessment Information
http://registrar.illinois.edu/financial/tuition.html

Student Insurance Office
http://www.si.uiuc.edu/

Delta Dental graduate student plan
http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current/dental.htm

EyeMed graduate student plan
http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current/vision.htm
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Fee Assessment Information
http://registrar.illinois.edu/financial/tuition.html

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As of January 1, 2014, smoking is prohibited on all campus property at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, both indoors and outdoors, in university-owned vehicles and in privately-owned vehicles parked on campus property. The advertising, sale, or free sampling of tobacco products is also prohibited on campus property. Littering the remains of tobacco products or any other related waste product on campus property is further prohibited.

**Purpose:** To provide a healthy environment that promotes the health, well-being, and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign by minimizing the negative effects of secondhand smoke; to improve fire safety; and to encourage a more sustainable environment.
Smoke-Free Campus Official Policy
Smoke-Free Campus Map
Tobacco-Free Toolkit
Electronic Cigarette Fact Sheet