

KETTERING UNIVERSITY

Office of Sponsored Research

Graduate Assistantship Policies

Graduate Assistantship Defined

For the purpose of this policy, a Graduate Assistantship provides academically-related employment for eligible graduate students. An eligible graduate student must be fully admitted into the graduate program at Kettering University. A Graduate Assistant can refer to either a Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) or a Graduate Research Assistants (RAs).

Teaching Assistants Defined:

- The specific duties of TAs vary from one department to another.
- Assist a professor with teaching his/her courses by work in the classroom, obtaining course materials, teaching segments of courses, establishing or monitoring web sites, making handouts, creating PowerPoint slides, grading undergraduate assignments, suggesting readings or activities for possible course adoption, co-teaching undergraduate courses or teaching undergraduate laboratories.

Time Commitment : TAs may be required to come to campus prior to the actual beginning of classes to assist with class-preparation duties. TAs usually completes their formal duties when examinations have been graded. In theory, the teaching assistantship requires 20 hours per week; however, the actual time TAs devote to their assignments varies. For example, in some disciplines, a new TA may find that a task such as grading initially requires more time than the usual 20-hour week allows. The hours spent in preparation, classroom or laboratory time, and grading differ from one discipline to another.

Research Assistants Defined:

- The duties of RAs vary according to the nature of the research project in which they participate and the source of the funding. RAs may be asked occasionally to conduct some work at home or to do their research at times when classes are not officially in session. The duties of RAs are also performed under the direction and supervision of a member of the faculty.
- Assist faculty with various research projects which may include laboratory, library, or field work that supports faculty member's academic research, conducting database searches for literature, writing literature reviews, analyzing quantitative/qualitative data, collecting data, co-authoring publications, maintaining referencing databases, assisting with publication formatting, editing articles, researching requests for grant proposals, present co-authored publications at conferences.

Time Commitment: RAs working on research projects funded by contracts or grants may also be working on material that is directly related to their thesis. It is not unusual in such cases for grant work and personal work to merge and for the work time to consume far more than the usual 20 hours. RAs usually follow the faculty advisors instructions regarding work when classes are not in session.

Eligibility Requirements and Student Responsibilities

An entering student is awarded an assistantship on the basis of academic potential. The student is expected to have been admitted fully without academic provision. The student is expected to have achieved a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale at the undergraduate level. A Graduate Assistant appointment is full-time, (20 hours per week). Graduate Assistants must also be registered for 8 credit hours to be considered full-time students by the University.

A Graduate Assistant is expected to remain in good academic standing and receive satisfactory Performance Reviews. The Graduate Assistant must work the required 20 hours per week and attend meetings held by the Office of Sponsored Research which are mandatory. If a Graduate Assistant needs to miss class and work time, approval by your faculty advisor must be received and the Office of Sponsored Research must be notified.

As outlined in the Kettering University Graduate Programs Catalog, undergraduate students who apply to the BS/MS program are only allowed to apply under Option 1. Graduate Assistantships are only available to students who are enrolled in their first masters degree program.

Administration of the Graduate Assistantship

Graduate Assistants at Kettering University are employed under the Office of Sponsored Research, although the Graduate Assistant is directly supervised by the faculty advisor. The faculty advisor determines the Graduate Assistant assignment and supervises his or her work. The faculty advisor is a source of information for details of the project. Details pertaining to the assistantship can be directed to the Office of Sponsored Research.

Appointment and Duration of Employment

Graduate Assistants are appointed for 18 months. Graduate Assistants, once appointed, must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better. Graduate students may be retained as Graduate Assistants only as long as they are registered as current, full time (8 credit hours) students in good academic standing and are performing satisfactorily their teaching or research duties. This appointment can be terminated if the Graduate Assistant is not showing satisfactory performance and normal progress toward a graduate degree.

Performance Evaluations

Each term the faculty member is responsible for completing a performance evaluation form. The forms will be emailed to the faculty advisor at the beginning of 6th week and is to be returned to the Office of Sponsored Research by the end of 7th week. The form should be discussed with the Graduate Assistant concerned and the Graduate Assistants must sign the form. The performance evaluation form will reside in the GAs file held in the Office of Sponsored Research.

Letters of Appointment

It is the responsibility of the office of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs to notify the graduate student in an official letter of the final offer of appointment. These letters provide pertinent information on the terms of the assistantship.

Tuition Waiver and Mandatory Fees

All GAs during a full-time appointment (20 hour) will receive 8 credits of tuition waiver per term as a standard benefit. Books are included in the tuition waiver. If a thesis is required, the tuition waiver will include Thesis I, Thesis II and one Thesis extension. The GA is responsible for the graduation fee.

Stipends

All stipends for Graduate Assistants, whether in research or teaching, are pre-determined by Kettering University. Currently, the Graduate Assistants will receive \$1,000.00 per month for the first year of employment. The Graduate Assistants will receive \$1,190.00 per month for the second year of employment.

Health Insurance

Graduate Assistants are required to have a health benefits program. Kettering University requires all enrolled students to submit proof of health insurance through a third party. The Maksin Group verifies coverage through their online system at www.Maksin.com/KetteringU.shtml. Students who fail to provide proof of insurance through the waiver process will automatically be enrolled in Maksin's Accident and Sickness Insurance Plan, at a cost of \$476.00 semi annually (coverage from July 1, 2008 thru December 31, 2008). Students may also purchase dependent coverage through the group. For more information, contact University Wellness Center Office at 810-762-9650.

International Students

All international students who are to be appointed to a Graduate Assistant position must have the appropriate visa and be completely aware of all immigration requirements. If the required documentation is not provided, your appointment is voided.

Facilities

Departments generally provide the Graduate Assistant with suitable workspace, laboratory space, and office space, when necessary. Also, the Graduate Assistant usually have access to desks, file space, mail-boxes, computers, telephones, and copy machines or services. Contact the individual department or assigned faculty member for more specific information.

Termination

Graduate Assistants are expected to meet the standards of performance described at their appointment and to maintain satisfactory academic progress toward their degree. Failure to meet either set of standards can lead to termination of the assistantship. Although, immediate termination may be invoked for serious misbehavior or failure to perform, under normal circumstances of poor performance the following guidelines will be followed:

1. Counsel with faculty advisor and Office of Sponsored Research and Graduate Assistant is put on probation.
2. Probation requires a weekly meeting between the faculty advisor and the Graduate Assistant. A Probation Form must be completed and returned to the Office of Sponsored Research to be placed in the Graduate Assistant's file.
3. If the Graduate Assistant receives four consecutive reviews rated as satisfactory, the Graduate Assistant will be placed on good standing.
4. If the Graduate Assistant receives four consecutive reviews rated as unsatisfactory, the Graduate Assistant will be terminated.

A Graduate Assistants who believes that his or her graduate assistantship has been terminated unjustly may appeal the decision in writing to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs within 30 days. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will make the final decision regarding termination of the appointment.