

Revised copy to be moved from Graduate School Web Site to Graduate Catalog under the heading “Financial Assistance”

Graduate Assistantships

Students admitted to the Graduate School may be eligible to receive financial support in the form of an assistantship. The primary purpose of graduate assistantships is to promote the successful completion of an academic program by enabling students to work in an academic setting while they earn their degrees. Graduate assistants work under the supervision of a faculty member. Graduate assistantship assignments provide support of the university’s teaching, research or service missions for the benefit of the student in an area closely related to the student’s chosen field of study. Employment is measured as a proportion of full-time equivalent (FTE) status, with 1.0 FTE representing employment estimated to be 40 hours per week. For a full list of the requirements and eligibility criteria applicable to Graduate Assistants, please see the *GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP CONTRACT* at [insert link].

Types of Graduate Assistantships

There are three types of graduate assistantships at East Carolina University: graduate teaching assistants (GTA); graduate research assistants (GRA); and graduate administrative support assistants (GSA).

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)

A GTA works with a supervising faculty member to gain instructional skills and an increased understanding of the discipline. The GTA is provided a stipend and their primary responsibilities are to support the University's instructional mission. Services provided by a GTA may include some or all of the following: classroom or laboratory teaching; advising and mentoring of students; proctoring examinations; grading papers, homework, and/or projects; accompanying/coaching musical or vocal performances; providing artistic instruction or assisting with preparation and management of materials and programs that are utilized in imparting knowledge or in the instructional process; or providing other general assistance in the instruction process.

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)

A GRA works with a supervising faculty member to provide general support to the University's research mission. These responsibilities may or may not relate directly to the student's thesis or dissertation. Duties of the GRA primarily involve applying and mastering research concepts, practices, or methods of scholarship. Services provided by a GRA may include some or all of the following: assisting faculty members in a research or creative activity; performing degree-related professional or administrative services that support research, instruction, professional development, or outreach missions of the University; developing and evaluating instructional materials or curricula; or assuming responsibility for designated scholarly endeavors.

Graduate Administrative Support Assistant (GSA)

A GSA provides administrative and support services to the University related to the student’s chosen field of study.

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Limitations on FTE, Workload, and Appointments

The Graduate School limits the FTE of graduate assistantships in order to ensure that students make adequate satisfactory academic progress and complete their degrees within appropriate time limits. A Graduate Assistantship of 0.50 FTE is estimated to be the equivalent of 20 hours of work per week. Assistantships up to this limit do not require permission of the Dean of the Graduate School. Exceptions of 0.51 up to a maximum of 0.625 FTE, equivalent to an estimated maximum of 25 hours per week, require written justification from the student's program director and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School or his/her designee. Exceptions for appointment totals exceeding 0.625 require the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. The sponsoring unit must allocate sufficient funds to cover the employer's portion of the NC State Employee's Health Insurance plan, if applicable.

These guidelines are applicable to all academic terms.

The combined maximum workload limits for ECU graduate assistants as stated above extend to include all forms of graduate student employment including, but not limited to, hourly graduate student employment, work-study employment at ECU and any other University within the University of North Carolina System.

A Student Worker is Different from a Graduate Assistant

A Student Worker is an employed student that may not meet some or all of the above criteria pertaining to Graduate Assistants. Student Workers must be paid based on actual time worked as assigned. Documentation of hours worked via a time sheet and an hourly wage of at least the Federal minimum wage (\$7.25, as of 2012), are required. Contact the Office of Student Employment [Insert link] with regard to the additional requirements for employing Student Work