

1. GENERAL

- 1.01 The term “Graduate Assistant” as used at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) indicates a graduate student who is employed by the University on a part-time basis as either a teaching or a research assistant. A teaching assistant is usually employed one-quarter or one-half time to teach lower division courses and/or laboratories under the supervision of a full-time faculty member. A graduate assistant working as a research assistant is employed to perform specific research duties or to assist in office functions in a position related to their degree program.

There are six types of graduate assistantships at SHSU.

Master’s Level Graduate Assistants

- a. Graduate Teaching Assistant
- b. Graduate Research Assistant
- c. Graduate Assistant

Doctoral Level Graduate Assistants

- a. Doctoral Teaching Assistant
- b. Doctoral Research Assistant
- c. Doctoral Fellow

- 1.02 Graduate Assistantships, funded positions designed to benefit students and enhance the instructional and research mission of SHSU, are made available each year to qualified applicants.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND DEFINITIONS

- 2.01 A half-time Graduate Teaching Assistant or a Doctoral Teaching Assistant normally is responsible for two courses, or four laboratories, or twenty clock hours of duty each week and is expected to be enrolled in six to nine semester hours of course work each semester, or students who have only the thesis or dissertation to complete may, with permission from the Dean of Graduate Studies, enroll in only 3 semester hours each semester. These assistants are employed by an academic department, usually paid from faculty salaries, and are responsible for, or in charge of, a class or class section, or a quiz, drill, or laboratory section. According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) guidelines, they normally must have earned eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline, report directly to a faculty member, and be evaluated regularly, if they are the instructor of record. In rare circumstances, exceptions to the 18-hour guideline may be granted on a case-by-case basis if the background and credentials of the teaching assistant are appropriate to the course and approved by the department chair, academic dean, and Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- 2.02 A half-time Graduate Research Assistant, Graduate Assistant, Doctoral Research Assistant, or Doctoral Fellow may be assigned duties associated with research of a technical or professional level, faculty support, or other duties as permitted by the funding source, with twenty clock hours of duty each week and is expected to be enrolled in six to nine semester hours of course work each semester, or students who have only the thesis or dissertation to complete may, with permission from the Dean of Graduate Studies, enroll in only three semester hours each semester. Funding for these positions is usually derived from departmental operating expense or external sources such as grants, contracts, fellowships, or endowments.
- 2.03 Graduate students on an assistantship may not hold other salaried positions from the University. An exception to this rule may be made with the written approval of the appropriate academic dean. A graduate student on an assistantship may not be employed more than a combined total of a 0.70 full-time equivalent (FTE) from all sources of funding.

3. REMUNERATION

A stipend is paid in accordance with University faculty/staff payment schedule. Nonresidents (including citizens and permanent residents of the U.S. and all foreign students) employed as graduate, research, or teaching assistants on at least a half-time basis in a position related to their degree programs are entitled to pay the resident tuition rate.

4. HIRING

- 4.01 The hiring of Graduate Assistants will be in consonance with Academic Policy Statement 800114, Academic Instructional and Research Personnel. To be eligible for appointment to a Graduate Assistantship, the applicant must have met all requirements for regular admission to graduate studies. The maximum course enrollment load for Graduate Assistants on one-half time employment is nine hours per semester or three hours per summer session. Graduate Assistants on less than a half-time assistantship may have their maximum course load authorization increased proportionately by the appropriate department/school chair. Determination of maximum load for summer school is dependent upon the recommendation by the dean.
- 4.02 Graduate Assistants usually are appointed for one academic year, i.e., two semesters, and may have the position renewed. Some assistantships may also include a summer appointment in addition to the fall and spring semesters. In some circumstances, Graduate Assistants may be limited to a single semester. Retention of the Graduate Assistant position is at all times conditional upon the continued good standing of the student in graduate studies (not less than a 3.0 minimum overall grade point average)

and upon satisfactory performance of work assignments for which the stipend is provided.

- 4.03 Applications for positions of Graduate Teaching Assistant and Doctoral Teaching Assistant may be obtained from the office of the academic dean or department/school as appropriate.

5. QUALIFICATIONS

- 5.01 Graduate Teaching Assistants and Doctoral Teaching Assistants who have primary responsibility for teaching a course or laboratory for credit and/or for assigning final grades for such course or laboratory must be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching field, receive regular in-service training, and be regularly evaluated.
- 5.02 Criteria for selection of Graduate Teaching Assistants and Doctoral Teaching Assistants may include but are not limited to undergraduate/graduate grade point average, experience, performance on the GRE or GMAT, and letters of recommendation.
- 5.03 Prior to teaching a lecture section of a course, a Graduate Teaching Assistant or Doctoral Teaching Assistant normally must have earned at least eighteen (18) graduate semester hours in the teaching field or related field.

The requirements of paragraph 5.03 do not apply to graduate students on assistantships who are engaged in activities such as programmatic support.

6. ORIENTATION/TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND EVALUATION

- 6.01 All Graduate Assistants will receive orientation/training, supervision, and evaluation necessary to ensure their effective performance as classroom/laboratory teachers, researchers, or office workers.
- 6.02 Department/School chairs are responsible for ensuring that the orientation/training, supervision, and evaluation of Graduate Assistants are accomplished.

7. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

In accordance with the provisions of Academic Policy Statement 871214, English Language Proficiency for Instructional Personnel, each written recommendation for the employment of a Graduate Teaching Assistant or Doctoral Teaching Assistant will bear the following endorsement from the appropriate academic chair/dean:

