Graduate Appointments

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2.1 General Information

Graduate assistantships are available in many academic departments. Prospective graduate students should contact their admitting department for information on assistantship availability. This appointment is a union-represented position. You will be a member of the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) bargaining unit, represented by MEA-MFT. (See Collective Bargaining Agreement [https://mus.edu/hr/cba/collbarg.asp]). You are bound by the terms and conditions in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, applicable policies of the University and Board of Regents, and applicable state and federal laws.

Note: All students must be in good academic standing to be eligible for an appointment. Non-degree graduate students are ineligible for graduate assistantships or graduate tuition waivers.

The Electronic Graduate Assistantship Appointment Form [https://www.montana.edu/gradschool/forms.html] (eGAAF) does not constitute a contract of employment. Final appointment and continuation authority resides with The Graduate School.

Fall and spring terms

• Students with assistantships who are enrolled in in three (3) or more credits are appointed as graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) or graduate research assistants (GRAs).
• Graduate student assistants (GSAs) work in a non-academic department and perform duties that align with the student’s educational and career goals.
• Graduate assistantship appointments are for a minimum of ten (10) hours per week and a maximum of nineteen (19) hours per week.
• Students with assistantships who are enrolled in three (3) to five (5) credits during an academic year term are not exempt from payroll taxes.

Summer

• Graduate assistants appointed as GRAs, GTAs, or GSAs during the spring semester may continue with a summer appointment without taking summer courses, with the exception of the 1-credit extension.
• Graduate assistants appointed as GRAs, GTAs, or GSAs may work up to forty (40) hours per week. The minimum appointment is ten (10) hours per week.

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS —

• International graduate students appointed as a graduate research or teaching assistant for nineteen (19) hours must be enrolled in six (6) credits, as their GTA/GRA assistantship is considered part of their academic load.

• Summer enrollment is optional, unless the student initially arrives in the U.S. for summer term, in which case the minimum requirement is three (3) credits.

See Office of International Programs [https://www.montana.edu/international/]

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2.2 Appointments

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT (GTA) — A GTA is a graduate student who is involved in instruction, usually of undergraduates. MSU faculty members oversee all GTA teaching duties.

General duties include:

• Actual instruction in a classroom setting;
• Instruction in recitation sections;
• Conducting help sessions and holding office hours to advise students on class assignments;
• Assisting with laboratory setup;
• Grading papers, exams, laboratory reports, and homework; and/or
• Other duties pertaining to the instructional mission of MSU.

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT (GRA) — A GRA is a graduate student who conducts research in a relevant area of their major course of study under the direction of a faculty member. The research often forms the basis for a thesis or dissertation.

General duties include:

• Performing experiments, calculations, and analyzing the results;
• Proposing new research problems;
• Disseminating scholarly work;
• Attending conferences and symposia to present results; and/or
• Training and supervising less experienced research personnel.

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2.3 Tuition Waiver

A tuition waiver does not cover the various fees associated with a student’s tuition and fee statement.

• Tuition waivers must be used in the same semester as the appointment.
• Tuition waivers are available on a limited basis.
• The Graduate School is not obligated to award a tuition waiver based on promises made by departments.

DEADLINES —

• Students must be enrolled for all credits that will be waived no later than tenth (10th) day of classes.
• Students must confirm attendance with Student Accounts [http://www.montana.edu/wwwbu/studentaccts.html] no later than fifteenth (15th) day of classes.

Note: Students may be required to pay full tuition if the tuition waivers are awarded after the fifteenth (15th) day of classes.
2.4 Other Student Employment

A graduate student at MSU may be employed primarily through a graduate teaching or research assistantship. However, graduate students may also work as a student employee at Residence Life, University Food Services, ASMSU tutoring, and so forth. Twenty (20) hours is the maximum total hours per week graduate students can work on campus.