

# Graduate Appointments

## 2.1 General Information (p. 1)

## 2.2 Appointments (p. 1)

## 2.3 Tuition Waiver (p. 1)

## 2.4 Other Student Employment (p. 2)

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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 (<http://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.

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**Note: All graduate certificate, masters, and doctoral students in good academic standing are eligible for a graduate assistantship and tuition waivers. Students on academic notice qualify. Non-degree students are not eligible for graduate assistantships and tuition waivers. Degree-seeking graduate students on academic warning may submit an appeal to the Graduate School to be eligible for an assistantship.**

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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 three (3) or more credits are appointed as graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) or graduate research assistants (GRAs) or graduate service assistants (GSAs).
- 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 FICA & Medicare 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 may be enrolled in six (6) credits or more, 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, OIP will determine the required enrollment.

See Office of International Programs (<https://www.montana.edu/international/>)

Back to top (p. 1)

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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 may 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 may 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.

Back to top (p. 1)

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### 2.3 Tuition Waiver

- A tuition waiver typically comes with a GTA appointment.
- 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 tuition 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.

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

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[Back to top \(p. 1\)](#)

#### **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.

[Back to top \(p. 1\)](#)