



HLC Accreditation 2016-2017

Evidence Document

Academic Affairs

Graduate School

Graduate Student Assistant Orientation

Additional information:

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GRADUATE SCHOOL

New Graduate Teaching Assistantship Workshop

Thursday, August 18, 2016

HH 208

- 12:30 p.m. Check-in (Hubbard Hall Main Lobby)
- 1:00 p.m. Welcome from Dean Livesay
- 1:05 WSU policies and procedures related to being a successful student *and* teacher
(Title IX; Academic Honesty: FERPA; SEAS)
Best pedagogical practices with your expanded role as student and teacher
Appointments
Academic progress
GTA handbook
- 2:00 p.m. Q&A
- 2:15 p.m. Refreshments

Agenda for Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Training

1. GTA roles at Wichita State
 - a. indirect instruction, with faculty
 - b. direct instruction, with students

2. Standards of conduct for GTAs
 - a. public figure
 - b. responsible employee
 - c. use of power and authority
 - d. enforcement of academic honesty
 - e. creating effective environment for learning

3. Pedagogical Best Practices

4. GTA work regulations
 - a. enrollment
 - b. time spent on GTA duties



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Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) Workshop

Kerry Wilks, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of the Graduate School

Adapted from the notes of:
David Wright, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Types of Graduate Student Assistantships

- GRA – graduate research assistant
- GA – graduate assistant
- **GTA – assisting and direct instruction**

Your new role in the university

- ☑ two roles
 - ☑ Student
 - ☑ Instructor



- ☑ advantages



Assisting GTAs

- Help faculty with preparing lectures & course materials
- Development and/or monitoring of examinations
- Facilitate group discussions or laboratory experiments
- Grade examinations (but not assign grades)

Direct Instruction GTAs

- ❑ “Stand-alone” teachers → instructor of record
- ❑ Preparation of course lectures, laboratory assignments & course materials





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Standards of Behavioral Conduct for GTAs

New expectations and responsibilities

You are no longer evaluated as just a student...

☑ #1 Higher Standard of Conduct

☑ #2 Student Interaction

☑ #3 Power and Authority

☑ #4 Academic Honesty

#1 Held to a higher standard of conduct

- ☑ Becoming a public figure
- ☑ Ambassador




#2 Student Interaction



- ☑ Your friends as students
- ☑ What about students you hate?
- ☑ Intimate relationships?
- ☑ 3.06 Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment, Relationship Violence and Stalking Policy
- ☑ YOU are a “responsible employee” as an instructor.

Mandatory reporter!

#3 Power and Authority



Because power corrupts, society's demands for moral authority and character increase as the importance of the position increases.

(John Adams)

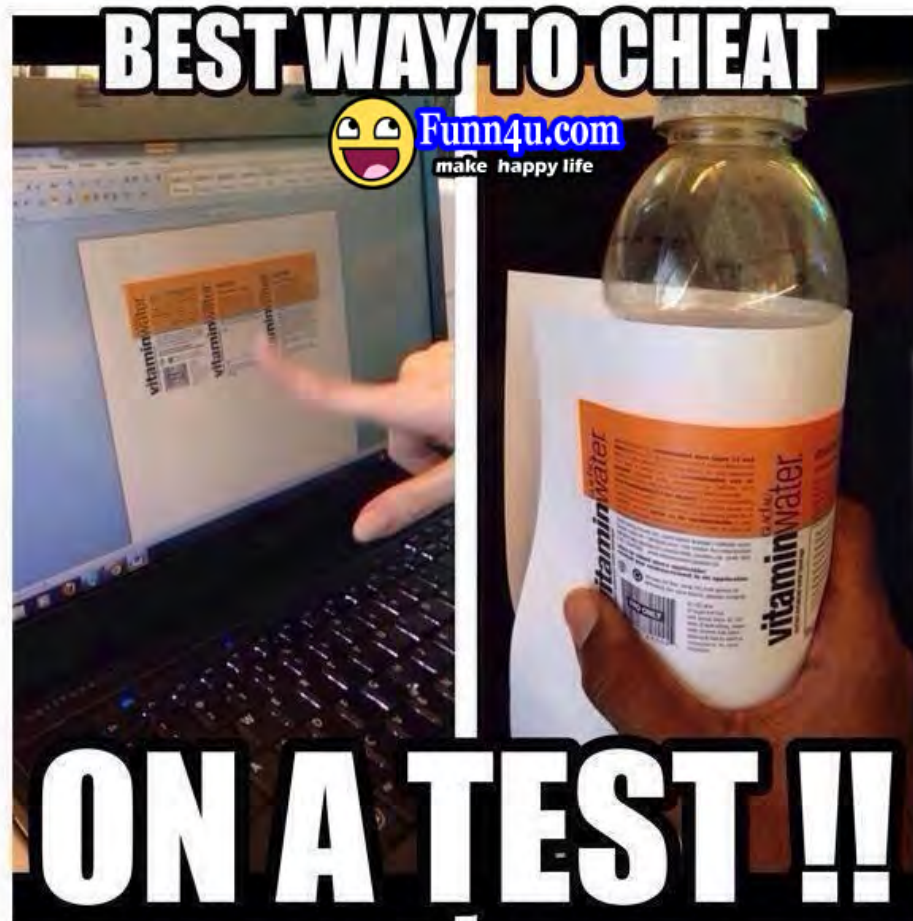
izquotes.com

Never underestimate the amount of trust students place in you or the power you have to influence their views and self-esteem.

#4 Academic honesty

- ☑ Cheating – we all do it (really?)
- ☑ Honesty and objectivity are the foundation of the academic community
- ☑ Plagiarism – zero tolerance





Other issues

- Control over the classroom
- Evaluation

FERPA Training

- Go to your myWSU page
- Click on “my finances” tab
- Click on FERPA on-line training (lower right)

SEAS

- Helping students succeed
- Timeliness



University Behavior Intervention Team (UBIT)



GTA Enrollment Regulations:

- Less than 6 graduate credit hours = exception
- Tuition waivers (500 & above)

- Summer



GTA Maximum Work Hours Regulations

- 20 hours
- Extra hours?

**I can't believe I work this hard to
be this poor.**





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Graduate School Orientation

Fall 2016

Kerry Wilks, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of the Graduate School

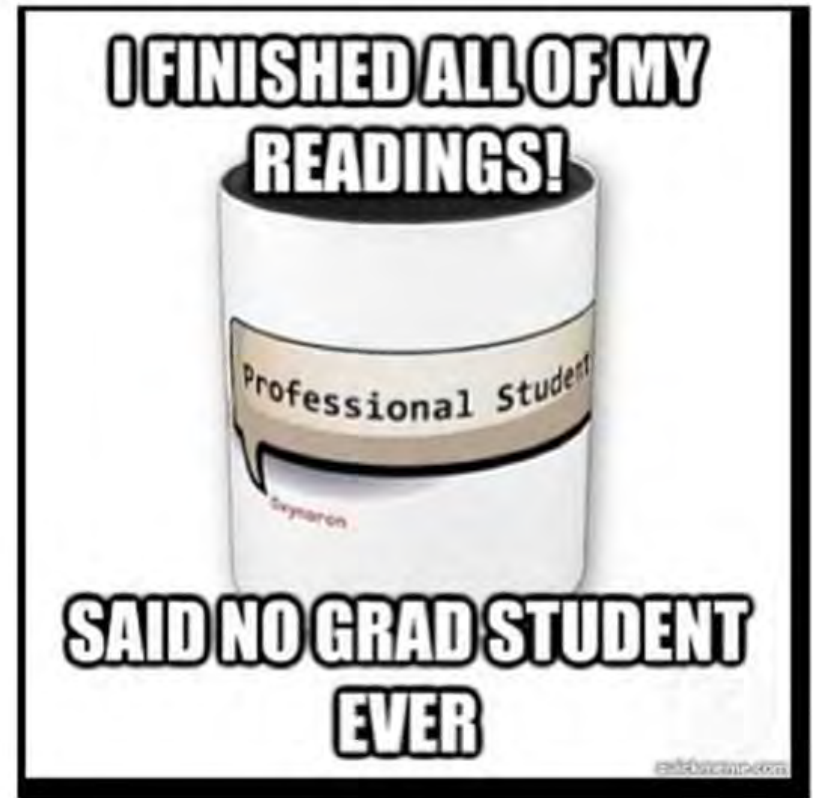
Adapted from the notes of:
David Wright, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

College *vs.* Grad School:
What's the difference?



Tips for Success

- Advisors
- Balance
- Procrastination
- Curiosity and Thick Skin!
- Resources



Professional Development Series

SPEAKER SERIES WITH DR. KROOK (Nov 10-11)

- Entering the Job Market with a Humanities or Art degree (UG)
- Non-Academic Job-Search Mechanics for Graduate Students and Postdocs

Graduate Research

- Graduate Research and Scholarly Projects (GRASP) Symposium on campus
- Capital Graduate Research Symposium (CGRS) in Topeka - Kansas relevant



Rules & Regulations



Enrollment

- Full-time graduate enrollment is 9 credit hours
- 500 & above → can be counted toward degree completion

- 500-600 level courses
- 700 level courses
- Must be enrolled in the semester of graduation

Academic Probation



Academic Probation

- Graduate students must maintain a 3.00 or higher to be in good academic standing
- Probation: No financial aid; assistantships
- Probation to Dismissal

Plan of Study

- agreement between student & program, detailing the coursework required for degree completion
- must be approved by the degree audit specialist
- should be filed after 12 credit hours (typically first year)
- may be amended at any time before graduation

Application for Degree (online)

- BE ENROLLED and Plan of Study submitted (audit)
- Diploma
- Hard deadline (fee required)
- Graduate School Exit Survey (online)
- Caution!! If you do not reach the payment screen, you have **NOT** completed the process
- New graduation date



Exception Requests

- May be filed for all Graduate School Regulations
 - The Graduate School does **not** grant exceptions to immigration regulations
- Exception request forms available on web
- Are not automatically granted
 - Must include the proper signatures
 - Must include a defensible rationale
 - It is often helpful for your advisor to include a memo/email

Many people are here to help you!





| Graduate Assistant Handbook |
(GTA/GRA/GSA)

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1 Graduate Assistantship Types and Duties

The Graduate School recognizes three types of assistantships: Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA), Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA), and Graduate Staff Assistantships (GSA).

1.1 Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)

The primary function of a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) is to provide either direct or indirect instruction. Both functions require GTAs to have the latitude to make independent decisions, use judgment, and exercise discretion when dealing with student matters. GTAs providing direct instruction have responsibility for specific courses, sections, or laboratories. They are usually the instructors of record for courses to which they have been assigned. GTAs whose role is indirect instruction may assist faculty members in preparing lectures or course materials and supervise or coordinate recitations, problem solving sessions, or laboratory sections. For both, the main purpose and responsibility of GTAs is to impart knowledge or training to students at Wichita State University.

GTAs who provide direct instruction are expected to follow departmental teaching guidelines, lesson plans, or syllabi. There is a wide-range of responsibilities according to your program which may include literature review; preparation of course lectures, laboratory/computer assignments, and/or course materials; monitoring of attendance; and preparing, administering and grading of daily assignments, examinations and clinical supervision. ~~GTAs may be given the authority by their departments to assign final course grades.~~

GTAs who provide indirect instruction may help faculty members prepare lectures, course materials, quizzes and tests, and supervise or coordinate recitations, problem solving sessions or laboratory sections. The student may monitor classroom examinations assigned by the instructor. If assigned to grade papers, or other types of examination, this must be included as a part of the overall GTA position and cannot be the only duty assigned.

1.2 Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)

The primary function of a graduate research assistant (GRA) is to assist faculty members in their scholarly and/or creative activities. Duties may include basic scientific research using laboratory facilities, computer programming or operation, data collection, correlation and preliminary interpretation of data, statistical analysis of data and writing preliminary reports, bibliographical work or assisting musicians and artists in their creative endeavors. GRAs have the latitude to make decisions involving judgment and/or discretionary choices when collecting data, performing experiments, operating equipment or assisting in studios or laboratories. GRAs may be required to order supplies and equipment, maintain inventories or trouble-shoot equipment and experiments. GRAs are obliged to follow departmental research guidelines or experimental protocols established by the faculty member in charge of the scholarly activity. GRAs may assist with experiments at field locations.

1.3 Graduate Staff Assistant (GSA)

The primary function of a graduate staff assistant (GSA) is to assist in non-teaching and non-research activities. Specific duties of the GSA vary widely, depending on the administrative or academic unit to which they are assigned, but should be at a level to make use of their education and abilities. Although GSAs may assist in various offices, their function is to perform more than the usual receptionist/secretary duties. Computer data entry, record maintenance, reports and survey preparation, correlating data, answering specific questions, are some of the duties GSAs will typically perform. Some GSAs may have musical performance as their principal assignment. GSA responsibilities may also include interacting with students, faculty, administrators, alumni, and visitors to the University. For this reason GSAs have the latitude to make decisions involving judgment and/or discretionary choices in accomplishing these duties.

2 Graduate Assistant Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Eligibility for Appointment

Academic Requirements during the Academic Year:

To be eligible for a graduate assistantship during the academic year, graduate students must:

- Be admitted to or have current status in a degree-bound Graduate program with an overall GPA of 2.75 or higher. Note that a justification from the program is required for students with a GPA of less than 3.00.
- Enroll as a full-time student (nine credit hours in fall or spring) during each semester of appointment. Some departments allow a graduate assistant with a full-time appointment (20 hours) to be enrolled in 6 – 8 hours during the fall or spring semester. You will only need an exception from the Graduate School if you wish to enroll in less than 6 hours (see section 7).

Academic Requirements for Summer:

To be eligible for a graduate assistantship during the summer, graduate students must:

- Be admitted to, or have good academic standing in a degree-bound program.
- Be enrolled in at least three credit hours. Enrollment may be waived if the graduate student held an assistantship during the preceding spring semester.

Departments/units may have additional criteria and summer appointments may not be available. The criteria listed here is the Graduate School's minimum requirement. Please check with your coordinator or hiring personnel for more information as to the specific norms in your area.

Non-compliance:

Failure to maintain enrollment or to comply with academic requirements will result in termination of appointment. The Graduate School is responsible for monitoring the student's compliance with enrollment and academic requirements and will terminate the appointment at the end of the payroll period in which it becomes known enrollment or academic requirements have not been maintained.

2.2 Spoken English Certification

All graduate assistants, whether native or nonnative speakers of English, who have teaching responsibilities, as defined by the Board of Regents, must have their spoken English evaluated by a departmental assessment committee. The committee will be appointed by the department chair or director and will be composed of at least three members: two faculty members and one student. The committee will judge the graduate assistant's spoken English according to the Spoken English Screening Form (SESF) scale of 1-4. A rating of 1 or 2 indicates competency in spoken English and is required for appointing the candidate.

If one member of the assessment committee rates the candidate's spoken English at 3 or 4, the candidate shall be required to achieve a minimum score of 23 on the Speaking portion of the internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a minimum score of 50 on the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) or a minimum score of 7.0 on the Speaking portion of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The SPEAK test will only be accepted when administered by officials at Wichita State University. Candidates are responsible for the cost of any of these exams.

Graduate assistants who are nonnative speakers of English, and who have teaching responsibilities as defined by the Board of Regents, that is, "classroom or laboratory instructional responsibilities and/or direct tutorial or advisement contact" must submit a minimum score of 23 on the Speaking portion of the TOEFL or a minimum score of 50 on the SPEAK or a minimum score of 7.0 on the Speaking portion of the IELTS, in addition to the SESF requirement described above. The SPEAK test will only be accepted when administered by officials at Wichita State University.

View [Chapter 3.09](#) of the Policies and Procedures Manual for more information.

2.3 Visa

International students must hold an F-1 or J-1 visa to be eligible for an assistantship position.

2.4 Orientation Workshop

Newly hired GTAs are required to participate in the mandatory GTA Orientation Workshop sponsored by the Graduate School. These workshops normally take place before the beginning of fall and spring classes. Follow-up workshops during the academic year may be scheduled as well. The purpose of the workshop is to inform graduate students of university rules and regulations to the execution of their duties as Graduate Teaching Assistants.

3 Important Title IX Information

3.1 Prohibiting Sexual Harassment

In addition to being illegal, sexual harassment runs counter to the objectives of Wichita State University. When people, whether student, faculty, staff, or visitor, feel coerced, threatened, intimidated, or otherwise pressured by others, their academic and work performance is likely to suffer. In addition, such actions violate not only the dignity of the individual but also the integrity of the University as an institution for learning. Academic freedom flourishes when all are free to pursue ideas in a non-threatening, non-coercive atmosphere of mutual respect.

Sexual harassment in all of its forms is thus harmful not only to persons involved but also the entire University community. The university has a comprehensive policy on sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, relationship violence and stalking policy in their policies and procedures manual. The Graduate School fully supports this policy and maintains a zero-tolerance policy with respect to these issues. Please refer to [Section 3.06](#) of the *WSU Policies and Procedures Manual* for a full understanding of these issues (Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment, Relationship Violence and Stalking Policy for Employees and Visitors). It is your responsibility to read and understand section 3.06 before you begin your assistantship.

3.2 Inappropriate Relationships

Whether you are an indirect or a direct GTA it is not proper to have any type of intimate, sexual or inappropriate contact with your students. This is true even if both parties consent to the relationship. As a teacher, you are in a position of authority (power differential) with your students. It is never acceptable. Never. In addition to the fact that this is covered under the previously mentioned university policy (Section 3.06), the Graduate School will have a zero tolerance policy. Such breaches of behavior will not only lead to the revocation of your assistantship, but due to the breach of professional ethics, which is an integral part of graduate studies, you may also be dismissed from your academic program.

Please note, in addition to the aforementioned policy, [Section 8.16](#) of the *WSU Policies and Procedures Manual* outlines protections for you within the University. We are committed to eliminating all sexual misconduct, relationship violence, and stalking within the University community. Please consult this very important policy if you ever feel uncomfortable. Resources are listed there within for you.

4 GTA Duties and FERPA

4.1 GTA Assignment Duties

GTAs (both direct and assisting) must use caution in the exercise of their duties. In general, GTAs should not be in a position to evaluate their peers course work nor provide instruction without proper background training or academic accomplishments.

The following Graduate School rules govern the assignments of GTAs duties:

- GTAs (working on their master's degree) are qualified to *assist with or teach* undergraduate courses (regular and lab).
- GTAs (working on their master's degree) are qualified to *assist with or teach* graduate lab courses (master's level) when they have already completed the lab themselves and are in the final stages of their master's program.
- GTAs (working on their doctoral degree) are qualified to *assist with or teach* master's level graduate courses (courses numbered 700 or below; regular or lab).
- GTAs (working on their doctoral degree) are qualified to *assist with or teach* lab courses at the 800 and 900 levels when they have completed the lab themselves and are in the final stages of their doctoral program.

All of the above statements assume that:

- The student has the academic preparation necessary to teach a particular course.
- The student is NOT enrolled in the course (regular or lab) in which they are assisting in or teaching.
- The student, who is assisting in courses (regular or lab) in which their program peers are enrolled, is NOT evaluating and grading their peers in that course.

	MASTER'S STUDENT	DOCTORAL STUDENT
<u>Direct:</u> Lab Course	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES, if has already taken the course and is in final stage of program*. 800-900: NO	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES 800-900: YES, if has already taken the course and is in final stage of program*.
Regular Course	400 and below: YES 500-700: NO 800-900: NO	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES 800-900: NO
<u>Assisting:</u> Lab Course	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES, if has already taken the course and is in final stage of program*. 800-900: NO	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES 800-900: YES, if has already taken the course and is in final stage of program*.
Regular Course	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES, if has already taken the course and is in final stage of program*. 800-900: NO	400 and below: YES 500-700: YES 800-900: YES, if has already taken the course and is in final stage of program*.

*"final stages of the program" means a POS is on file and ½ of the program hours are completed

4.2 Grades and Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is a Federal law that requires institutions to maintain the confidentiality of student education records. Wichita State University accords all the rights under the law to its students. No one outside the institution shall have access to nor will the institution disclose any information from students' education records without the *prior written consent* of the student(s), except when required or allowed by the law. These disclosures should only be made by the Registrar or other authorized individual.

A student's grade on a paper, test, or final grade report is part of his/her education record, as is the unique number used to identify the record of each student. Accordingly, grades or any other measure of academic performance may NOT be displayed or distributed in any manner that might permit an unauthorized person to find out someone else's grades and/or *myWSU* identification number.

You must avoid practices such as:

- a. Posting a copy of the grade list (with grades assigned) on the wall or door even if the name and part of the ID number is folded under or removed. Blackboard's grade book is an easy-to-use tool to post grades in a secure fashion that meets FERPA standards.
- b. Leaving a pile of graded papers, with the names and grades easily discernible, on a table or chair for students to pick up on their own whenever they can.
- c. Responding to a parent's questions about their child (your student). If this is ever an issue, please make sure you take the matter directly to the appropriate person supervising your teaching or to your department chair/director.

Still shaky? No worries as you will need to complete a mandatory on-line FERPA training. This is located at the *myFinances* tab in *myWSU*. You may review this as many times as is necessary. Do not hesitate to ask questions if you are unsure of any aspect of FERPA law.

4.3 Privacy of Student Information

Within the Wichita State University community, only those members, individually or collectively, acting in the students' educational interest are allowed access to computer based student education records. This access is granted in response to a specific internal "need-to-know" of the college or department. Access for any other purpose raises the distinct possibility of legal liability. When/if granted access you should **not release** information about students to other parties, particularly outside the institution, nor should you disclose any information from students' education records, without the prior consent.

Student files or lists of students should be locked up and out-of-sight when not in use. The concept of "need-to-know" applies to faculty and GTAs as well as to other third parties. An instructor may need certain information about a student in his/her class; an advisor may need information on his/her advisees. Otherwise, it may be difficult to establish a "need-to-know" for the average faculty member or GTA. Only full-time personnel, with the approval of the department chairperson (or college dean, as appropriate) should be permitted to view/access student files.

5 Graduate Assistant Benefits

5.1 Stipends

The actual dollar amount of an assistantship stipend varies according to the length of the appointment; type of work being done (which may consider maximum hours to be worked); and other variables units may consider as part of a given recruitment package. Payroll is issued biweekly according to the University payment cycle for the appointment period. If Friday (payday) is a holiday, paychecks will be issued on the closest preceding workday. Payroll dates may not coincide with appointment work dates.

5.2 Non-Resident to Resident Tuition

Non-resident graduate assistants (GTA, GRA, and GSA) who have an appointment of .40 EFT (approximately 16 hours maximum per week) or greater (up to .50 EFT with no more than 20 hours per week worked), are eligible, pursuant to regulations promulgated by the Kansas Board of Regents, for waiver of non-resident tuition to resident tuition. This tuition waiver is for the actual semester of appointment and does not include student fees. Graduate assistants must provide service from the 20th day of the semester through the remainder of the semester to be eligible for the non-resident to resident tuition waiver. Graduate students who were granted a waiver of non-resident tuition to resident tuition in the preceding fall and spring semesters also receive this benefit in the summer, whether or not they hold a summer appointment. If preceding does not exist (fall/spring appointment), to be eligible for a waiver of non-resident tuition to resident tuition in the summer, the student must hold an appointment of .40 EFT (16 hours per week assignment) or greater beginning no later than the 10th day of the 8-week semester and concluding at the end of the 8-week semester.

5.3 Waiver of In-State Tuition

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are eligible for full or partial waiver of in-state tuition (for courses numbered 500 and above), according to the following table, pursuant to budget instructions from the Kansas Board of Regents:

EFT	APPROX. HOURS / WEEK	IN-STATE TUITION WAIVED	
		GTA-direct instruction	GTA-indirect instruction
.50	20	100%	75%
.40	16	75%	55%
.25*	10	50%	35%
.12*	5	25%	15%

This waiver is granted for the actual semester of appointment and does not include student fees. Graduate teaching assistants must be appointed from the 20th day of the semester through the remainder of the semester to be eligible for the in-state tuition waiver.

* Non-resident GTAs holding appointments which total less than .40 EFT are responsible for the balance of their tuition assessed at the non-resident rate, since they do not qualify for the waiver of non-resident tuition to resident tuition.

To be eligible for an in-state tuition waiver during the summer, graduate teaching assistants must hold an appointment beginning no later than the 10th day of the teaching session. Please note: GTAs who are only teaching a 4 week session are entitled to the tuition waiver, but not the discounted health insurance benefits.

5.4 University Sponsored Health Insurance

Wichita State University and the Kansas Board of Regents, through the Kansas State Employees Health Care Commission, are pleased to offer a student health insurance plan for eligible graduate assistants. For eligible graduate assistants, a portion of the premium is paid. *The State of Kansas portion of the premium has already been deducted from the premium rates listed in the insurance brochure. Thus, the cost for the student is the amount indicated in the insurance booklet.*

All insurance information is available online at www.uhcsr.com/wichita.

To qualify for the graduate assistant health insurance plan, the student must hold a .50 EFT (20 hour week) appointment beginning no later than the 20th day of the semester (Fall and Spring) and concluding at the end of the semester. For Summer semester, the student must hold a .50 EFT (20 hour week) appointment beginning no later than the 10th day of the 8-week semester and concluding at the end of the 8-week semester.

If you wish to apply for the insurance (and are eligible), please complete the application and return it to the Graduate School (107 Jardine).

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT A NEW INSURANCE ENROLLMENT FORM EACH SEMESTER.

Health Insurance Enrollment for Fall 2016:

- Health insurance applications submitted to the Graduate School on or between August 1- August 31 will have coverage effective August 1 - December 31, 2016.
- Health insurance applications submitted to the Graduate School on or between September 1 and September 19th will **NOT** have coverage effective on August 1, 2016. Coverage date depends on when the health insurance application is submitted and when the graduate assistantship begins. The Graduate School will determine the effective coverage date when the student files the application. Personal health services received prior to the application being submitted to the Graduate School WILL NOT be covered by insurance.
- The Graduate School will **not** accept health insurance applications for Fall 2016 coverage after September 19, 2016.

Health Insurance Enrollment for Spring 2017:

- Health insurance applications submitted to the Graduate School on or between January 1- January 31 will have coverage effective January 1 - May 31, 2017.
- Health insurance applications submitted to the Graduate School on or between February 1 and February 13th will NOT have coverage effective on January 1, 2017. Coverage date depends on when the health insurance application is submitted and when the graduate assistantship begins. The Graduate School will determine the effective coverage date when the student files the application. Personal health services received prior to the application being submitted to the Graduate School WILL NOT be covered by insurance.
- The Graduate School will not accept health insurance applications for Spring 2017 coverage after February 13, 2017.

In order to make certain that non-immigrant international students attending Wichita State University have access to adequate medical care, students are required to maintain minimum levels of health insurance coverage. F-1 and J-1 students will need to ensure they have health insurance coverage during the summer 2017 semester.

5.5 Bookstore Discounts

Graduate assistants are eligible for a 10% discount on books (this includes textbooks) and magazines purchased from the Campus Bookstore. No discount is available for book rentals. In order to receive the discount you will need to show the cashier your Shocker card and your Notice of Appointment issued by the Graduate School. The 10% discount is good only at the **time of purchase**. They will not reimburse the discount after the fact.

5.6 Social Security

Graduate assistants are normally exempt from social security deductions while enrolled. Graduate assistants with summer appointments that are not concurrently enrolled in classes will have social security deducted. Questions regarding deductions should be directed to the Payroll Office, Jardine Hall 201.

5.7 Workers Compensation

The University provides coverage through state workers compensation self-insurance fund. Questions regarding this coverage should be directed to the Office of Employee Relations and Training in the Office of Human Resources.

6 Graduate Assistant Performance Expectations and Evaluations

6.1 Performance Expectations

Departments or units appointing graduate assistants should provide information about responsibilities, expectations, workspace, support services, etc. Departmental policies and procedures should be described and discussed. Standards of professional behavior expected in carrying out the terms of the appointment should be made in writing. An assistantship may be terminated prior to expiration of the period of service if the terms of the appointment are not met.

6.2 Performance Evaluation

Departments or units hiring graduate assistants are responsible for the graduate assistant's assessment. Procedures for making such assessments should be clearly spelled out and communicated to graduate assistants in writing. Performance assessment is an ongoing activity throughout the term of the appointment. Should problems with performance arise during the period of the assistantship, the responsible person in the appointing unit should meet with the graduate assistant and any other involved faculty or unit personnel and review the situation with specific directions and conditions issued in writing relative to continuation of the appointment. The extent of the formality of such reviews depends upon the seriousness of the problem. Personnel matters related to a graduate assistant appointment, such as performance assessment, must be done in a confidential setting with concern for the individual involved as well as for the appointing unit.

6.3 Grievance Procedures

Graduate assistants will be notified in writing of all decisions that affect their status as assistants, including performance evaluation summaries. Additionally, the graduate assistant will be notified in writing of any complaints received by the faculty supervisor, Department Chair, Academic Dean, or Graduate Dean concerning the graduate assistant's performance of duties. The graduate assistant will be given an opportunity to respond to such complaints.

If discipline or termination is recommended, the graduate assistant has the right to initiate an appeal process. The steps of the appeal process are:

- 1.) The graduate assistant should first consult with the assistantship supervisor to discuss the decision and determine if a mutually agreeable solution is possible.
- 2.) If a solution is not agreed upon, the graduate assistant should meet with the Department Chairperson, Academic Dean, or through the use of department/programs structures that may exist for this purpose.
- 3.) If the graduate student has exhausted the above steps without coming to an agreed upon solution, the graduate student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the Graduate School or dean's designee. A request to meet must be done in writing. The decisions of the dean on such issues are final.

7 Graduate Assistant Regulations and Exceptions

7.1 Minimum Enrollment Hours

Regulation: Required enrollment in at least 9 graduate semester hours taken for credit during fall/spring semesters (some units may reduce this to as low as 6 credit hours for full-time assistants, with the approval by the chair of the degree seeking program).

Justification: One of the Graduate School's more important goals is to encourage students to make satisfactory progress toward completion of their degrees. Master degree bound students normally complete their degrees in two years and doctoral students normally in four years. By requiring graduate assistants to enroll in a full-time course load, the Graduate School can be assured that the assistantship is not a hindrance to degree completion.

While programs have the discretion to reduce the minimum hours required to enroll from 9 to 6 hours without the need to file an exception, international students must also secure permission to enroll in less than 9 hours from the International Programs Office on campus. If graduate assistants wish to enroll in less than 6 hours, they MUST file an exception to graduate school regulations (forms are available on the Graduate School web-site). In order for the exception to be approved, the following conditions must be met:

- exception form must have the proper signatures and approval from the advisor/chair of the program
- have an approved plan of study on file
- student is typically in their last semester of coursework for their degree working on a final project, thesis, etc.
- have submitted the application for degree for the intended graduation semester

Exceptions for minimum enrollment hours are typically approved only once if the above conditions are met and no other extenuating circumstances exist.

7.2 Maximum Hours of Work - Academic Year

Regulation: Domestic students and international students on F-1 and J-1 visas should work no more than 20 hours per week in a full-time assistantship appointment while classes are in session and no more than a total of 40 hours per week during break periods. This total consists of any combination of campus work including assistantships, work-study, hourly student employment, and cooperative education. Summer appointments are considered break periods if a student is not taking courses. If a student is taking coursework in summer, the hours should be adjusted to correspond with a student's total work load.

Justification: The Graduate School's does not want the assistantship to hinder the student's progress toward degree completion. Given the academic work load of a typical graduate student (at least 3 hours of work for every 1 credit hour taken, totaling 36 academic work hours for a 9 hour enrollment) combined with their assistantship work hours, most graduate assistants put in 40 to 60 hours of combined academic and assistantship hours. The Graduate School, therefore, places a limit of 20 hours for an assistantship appointment.

Student may request additional hours by filing an exception (available online under "[Forms & Publications](#)" at the Graduate School's website). The maximum work hours allowed for **domestic** students is 30 hours per week. When such exceptions are approved, normally the following conditions have been met:

- the additional work hours are tied to academic studies/success
- the exception form has the proper signatures and approval from the advisor/chair of the program
- an approved plan of study is on file
- an application for degree has been filed if it is the last semester of coursework for the degree
- It is also helpful for your advisor to include a memo of support or to send an email to the Associate Dean or his/her assistant (once the exception is filed).

Other conditions that may qualify for an exception are practicum/internship hours associated with some professional and doctoral programs.

International students are prohibited from working more than 20 hours per week by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (check with the International Programs Office for exceptions to this requirement).

7.3 Grade Point Average (GPA)

One of the primary responsibilities of the Graduate School is to assure that students maintain good academic standing and make progress toward their degree. Therefore, all GAs are expected to maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.00 or higher. Failure to maintain academic standing may result in forfeiture of the GA appointment. Students with a GPA between 2.75 and 3.00 can have an assistantship providing an appropriate justification from the program is provided. However, there is also an expectation that these students have a legitimate path to a GPA of at least 3.00, which is a universal graduation requirement of the Graduate School.

8 Important Graduate School Forms & Deadlines

8.1 Plan of Study

The Plan of Study documents the required course work, degree option, and credit hours required to complete a degree program. You are required to have an approved Plan of Study on file in the Graduate School to graduate and in many cases to be eligible for your exceptions to Graduate School Regulations to be evaluated. It also serves as a guide to your course work and a contractual agreement between you and your program since the filing of the Plan of Study triggers the catalog year for your degree requirements.

Accordingly, the Graduate School encourages graduate students who are seeking a degree to file a Plan of Study as early as possible, no later than 12 graduate credit hours for master's students and at least by the end of the semester of completion of qualifying examinations for doctoral students.

Students may make changes to the Plan of Study at any time by submitting a revision to the Plan of Study form available at the Graduate School or Graduate School web page. However, the plan must be approved no later than the 20th day of the fall or spring semester, or the 10th day of the eight-week summer term, during the semester of graduation.

Failure to meet the deadline for filing an acceptable Plan of Study may result in a delay in graduation or loss of credit planned for use in the program.

8.2 Application for Degree and Exit Survey

The Application for Degree/Exit Survey notifies the Graduate School of your intention to complete your degree requirements. With this, the following is put into motion: an audit of your Plan of Study; course work completed or in process; and your academic standing. It also provides the name that will appear on your diploma and address information.

An Application for Degree/Exit Survey and \$15 filing fee must be submitted online within four weeks (20 class days) after the beginning of any fall or spring semester in which students plan to finish all requirements for the degree. Students planning to graduate at the end of the summer session must file an Application for Degree/Exit Survey and \$15 filing fee within two weeks (10 days) after the beginning of the regular eight-week session even if they plan to enroll for the second four-week session only.

If a student fails to complete degree requirements for the semester of a filed Application for Degree, a new Application for Degree and filing fee must be submitted.

Failure to meet the deadlines for the Application for Degree will result in a delay of graduation and in the awarding of the diploma.

The Application for Degree/Exit Survey is accessed through the *myWSU* portal. Locate the Graduation Links channel in the portal, and click on the Application for Degree link.

You will be directed to a payment page **AFTER** you have completed the application for degree and the exit survey.

***If your payment is not processed then you have **NOT** completed the application for degree and you will not be able to graduate.