



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

The Graduate School Handbook

A Guide to Academic Policies and Procedures

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GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

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This handbook covers academic policies and requirements pertaining to graduate students. Statements set forth in this handbook are for informational purposes only and should not be construed as the basis of a contract between a student and the institution. All graduate students must follow GCSU graduate policies. Individual graduate programs may have additional policies specific to their students. Therefore, students should familiarize themselves with policies in their respective programs as well as those outlined here.

Mission

The mission of graduate studies at Georgia College & State University is to provide acclaimed and distinctive programs to meet the academic, professional and workforce needs of the students and communities we serve. The Graduate School at Georgia College & State University provides a framework of excellence in graduate education through student engagement, faculty mentorship, collaborative initiatives, and research to support the mission of GCSU and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

Vision

The vision of graduate studies at Georgia College & State University is to be at the forefront of best practices in graduate education, develop and sustain innovative programs, and provide exemplary learning environments to meet the needs of students and communities.

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council provides a central body and voice to support communication between existing graduate programs, to review all proposals related to graduate programs for content and consistency and maintain high standards by graduate faculty and graduate students.

The council shall:

- act on behalf of the Graduate Faculty,
- review and when applicable develop university policies, procedures and practices affecting graduate studies,
- evaluate and approve new graduate program prospectus/proposals submitted by college deans before forwarding to the Office of Academic Affairs
- evaluate and approve proposed changes to the delivery of graduate programs,
- support the accreditation of graduate programs by regional and national accreditation commissions,
- evaluate and approve proposals for the deactivation and/or termination of graduate programs.

Admissions

Admission is based on criteria specific to each program. The programs of study emphasize independent and advanced applied research skills, professional development, cultural breadth beyond the baccalaureate degree, and sophisticated techniques applicable to many paths taken by students with superior academic qualifications.

Graduate study is much more than a continuation of undergraduate work and should be contemplated only by students who have previously demonstrated an exceptional intellectual ability and capacity for independent thought and investigation. Admission requirements serve to maintain the high standards that are characteristic of graduate study and to benefit students by helping them decide whether they should undertake such a course of action. By means of an admission classification system, Georgia College & State University provides for the maintenance of these standards in its degree programs. It also provides for, and makes its facilities available to, a wide variety of students who are not eligible for advanced degrees, or who do not wish to become applicants for degrees.

All graduate programs are administered through the Academic Colleges. Program coordinators monitor graduate programs, provide assistance to students, make admission decisions, and perform other operational functions for their particular program areas.

Consideration for admission to graduate study at Georgia College will be given to applicants who hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution and who present evidence of probable success in graduate work. Students who are presently enrolled in a graduate program at another institution, or have taken graduate-level courses elsewhere, must be in good standing at that institution to be eligible for admission to a program of graduate study at Georgia College.

Please check the program page at www.gcsu.edu/graduate/all-graduate-programs for more information about deadlines.

The following applies to all graduate applicants:

- Applicant must hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- For students seeking application into a doctoral program, applicants must hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- Applicants seeking admission into a degree, post-master's certificate, certification, or endorsement program must provide the Graduate Admissions Office with official transcripts from each institution in which they enrolled, even if the coursework is recorded on another institution's transcript or completed through a study abroad program.
- Applicants seeking admission into a stand-alone certificate program or for non-degree enrichment must provide an official transcript showing successful completion of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- Students previously admitted under non-degree status are required to provide official transcripts for all college/university level coursework before they may be

admitted to a degree, post-master's certificate, certification, or endorsement program.

- Admission into a stand-alone certificate program, as transient, or under non-degree enrichment status does not guarantee admission into a degree, post-master's certificate, certification, or endorsement program.
- An application for admission must be completed online. The online application fee is \$50.00. Students who have paid the application fee within the past six years or were enrolled at Georgia College within the past six years are exempt from the application fee.
- Applicants from countries other than the United States who intend to be in F-1 or J-1 student visa status must apply for admission through GC's International Education Center and must submit additional documents as required by the International Education Center.
- Applicants who completed college/university-level coursework outside of the United States must present official transcripts (certified or attested) in the original language, as well as an official course-by-course evaluation of all college/university-level work completed by a National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) member.

Degree programs may require applicants to provide acceptable results of their performance on applicable graduate tests including, but not limited to: Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), Georgia Assessment for the Certification of Educators (GACE), and/or Miller Analogies Test (MAT). Test scores may not be more than five years old and will only be accepted if received directly from the testing company.

Specific degree programs may require other supporting materials. An application is not considered complete, nor will be reviewed for admission, until all required documents are on file in the Graduate Admissions Office. See Conditional Admission of Graduate Students for exception.

The program coordinator gives approval for admission to a degree program, subject to the minimum requirements of the University. Applicants are admitted to a degree program with the recommendation of the program coordinator and/or in some circumstances direct admission is granted following initial review. A student will not be allowed to register for or complete more than 12 semester hours in any degree program without attaining regular admissions status.

Doctoral Education

Professional doctoral degrees at GCSU (DNP and ED.D) are geared towards professionals to demonstrate applied mastery within the discipline.

- The Ed.D. is offered to advance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of candidates committed to scholarly study of and contribution to the field of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I).

- For additional information on the ED.D please see:
<https://www.gcsu.edu/education/proflearning/curriculum-and-instruction-edd>
- The DNP program educates graduate nursing professionals as clinical leaders who improve the delivery of healthcare through evidence-based practice. The DNP offers two distinct curricular pathways.
 - The **BSN to DNP** track is tailored for individuals **holding a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) who wish to obtain a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)** while simultaneously completing requirements that would make them eligible to take certification exams as a Family Nurse Practitioner, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, or Women's Health Nurse Practitioner.
 - The **post-graduate DNP (MSN to DNP) track** is designed for nurses who **already possess a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)** and provides them with the opportunity to pursue a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) to further advance their expertise in the field.
 - For additional information on the DNP please see:
<https://www.gcsu.edu/health/nursing/nursing-dnp>

Double Bobcats Pathway

This program allows an undergraduate student to enroll in *graduate-level courses*. Admitted students can take up to 12 semester hours in graduate-level course credit to fulfill undergraduate degree requirements in the Double Bobcats pathway. *Students must be fully accepted to The Graduate School **and** complete at least one term of graduate coursework for hours to apply, and student must remain in **good standing**.* There is no class or hour requirement for how many classes must be completed at that time.

- Summer and Fall admission: January 31
- Spring admission: September 15

Undergraduate students accepted into the Double Bobcats pathway may count up to 12 hours of graduate-level courses toward both their undergraduate and graduate degrees. Completion of double bobcat courses does NOT guarantee admission into the graduate program.

See the **Double Bobcats** section policy: [Enrollment in Graduate Classes by Undergraduate Students](#).

Admission to Candidacy

An applicant who has been determined by the coordinator of the program to have met all requirements for admission to a degree program as described in the degree program section of the catalog may be admitted as a regular graduate student. In no instance will more than a total of 12 semester hours of any classification (ex. Double Bobcat, Transfer, etc.) be applied toward a degree program.

- The rule can be viewed in the graduate catalog [here](#). The 12 hour limit on graduate transfer credit can be seen [here](#).

Regular Admission to the Georgia College Graduate Program includes Admission to Candidacy. The admission to candidacy includes a program of study (found in Degree Works) that serves as a mutual agreement between the student applicant and Georgia College. The DegreeWorks program of study must be followed and is the means to view programmatic approvals within the student's graduate program.

- In the C&I Ed.D. program candidates apply to be Admitted to Candidacy when they have successfully completed all core courses and passed their comprehensive exams.

There are some programs (ex. English, MPA, Music Therapy) that grant provisional admissions to students for several reasons – incomplete application materials, conditional academic performance (strong academic performance but low GPA/test scores), additional requirements (prerequisites needed) or other exceptional circumstances. Provisional admission requirements for such programs can be found on the programmatic webpage and each program is responsible for defining its admission requirements.

Residency Classification

For Web Based Students

The cost of online graduate programs at GCSU is the same for in-state and out of state students.

Please see <https://www.gcsu.edu/financialaid/cost-attendance> and <https://www.gcsu.edu/businessoffice/tuition-and-fees> for specific program costs.

Important note to GCSU students residing outside of Georgia

With the growing demand for online programming, Georgia College & State University is mindful of the needs of our out-of-state students. While it is the student's responsibility to confirm eligibility for licensure in any state outside of Georgia, we are committed to assisting you with contacting the appropriate agency in your state. To assist with these efforts, any students enrolled in online programs which customarily lead to professional licensure will be provided this information and follow-up assistance from their program, department, and college faculty and staff as needed.

More information can be found: <https://www.gcsu.edu/distance-education/state-authorization>

On Campus Graduate Programs

Non-Resident Students

Each semester, students who do not qualify as residents of the state of Georgia will pay out-of-state tuition.

Residency for in-State Tuition Purposes

The following general descriptions are by no means all-inclusive, nor do they supersede existing regulations concerning in-state residency. This should only be used as an explanatory guide for Georgia residency. Detailed official guidelines are listed in the codes of the University System of Georgia.

Since Georgia College is a state-supported institution, students must show documented proof of residency and indicate the duration of their residency in order to qualify for in-state tuition. Following admission, students who are classified as non-residents may apply for in-state residency by completing the Petition for Classification as an In-State Student, which is available from the Graduate Admissions Office. In reviewing petitions, the Georgia College Residency Committee looks at three primary items of proof.

1. Students must first prove that they have established a primary domicile or permanent Georgia home for at least twelve consecutive months immediately preceding the beginning of classes for the term to be considered for residency. Typically, the residency status of a dependent student is tied to the status of the parent(s), so the parent(s) must show proof of domicile.
2. Invariably, students and/or parent(s) of dependent students also should provide documentation showing payment of Georgia state income tax, as this shows a tie to the state that proves financial support for the Georgia educational system. Mere property ownership in Georgia, by itself, is usually insufficient.
3. The Residency Committee also suggests students include copies of any other documents showing their intent to be a Georgia resident, such as a Georgia driver's license, car or voter registration, home ownership, full-time employment records, etc. Attending college in Georgia is not proof of intention to be a Georgia resident.

In reviewing petitions for in-state residency, Georgia College considers each student's situation as unique, and so there are no universal formulas. In general, though, the three items mentioned above are key. Georgia College does understand that there are situations, such as parents living in separate states or a family in the military, which may alter the review process.

Special Situations Involving Residency

The following descriptions should help in understanding what the Committee considers when reviewing certain situations.

Dependent versus Independent Students

- If a student is listed as a dependent on their parent or legal guardian's previous year's tax returns or receives more than 50% of their financial support from a parent or guardian, they are considered a dependent student and Georgia College considers the student to be a resident, for tuition purposes, of the parent or guardian's state of residence. (A legal guardian must provide court and/or financial documentation of support for the student.)
- Independent students who wish to establish in-state residency for tuition purposes must document that their parent(s) have not claimed them as a tax dependent for the twelve months prior to the start of the term, and that the students have provided for more than 50% of their financial support as shown in federal and state tax returns.
- At times, current students at Georgia College may have their residency status changed to in-state, but they must show detailed evidence that they are an actual resident of Georgia, and they would have lived in Georgia even if they had not been in college. Current students may call the Graduate Admissions Office at 478-445-6289 if they have more questions regarding this situation.

Separated Family Situations

If a student lives outside Georgia, but a parent is a Georgia resident, it is sometimes possible for the student to be considered a Georgia resident for tuition purposes. The student and the parent must document that the parent has lived in Georgia for the twelve consecutive month period prior to enrollment.

Military Personnel and U.S. Citizens Living Abroad

- Dependents of active-duty military personnel who claim Georgia residency must provide Georgia College with documentation, such as Georgia tax records or a Leave and Earnings statement.
- Dependents of active military personnel who are residents of other states but are stationed in Georgia can receive a waiver of the out-of-state tuition difference, providing the parent(s) submit documentation to the Business Office showing the military posting. The waiver continues only as long as the requirements are met.
- Dependents of U.S. citizens living abroad who consider themselves residents of Georgia must provide Georgia tax records and documentation showing Georgia as their last state of residency, as well as proof of a prior domicile in Georgia to which they may return.

Non-U.S. Citizens

Non-U.S. citizens are only eligible for in-state residency if they are lawful permanent residents as documented by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service or have been granted a visa in an eligible category. These students must still provide documentation of in-state residency for the twelve-month period. F-1 student visas are not eligible.

Waivers of Out-of-State Tuition

Students may be eligible for a waiver of the out-of-state tuition difference if they are in one of the following categories: full-time employees of the University System, their spouse and dependent children; full-time teachers in a Georgia public school and their dependent children; active-duty military personnel and their dependents while stationed in Georgia. These students do not need to complete the Petition for Residency but should contact the Business Office for more details about the required documentation needed.

Appeals Procedure

Any student wishing to appeal a decision by institution officials concerning residence classification shall file a Notice of Appeal with the appropriate review committee at the institution.

Following a review at the highest level at the institution, a student may apply to the Board of Regents for a review of the final decision of the President. Procedures are provided in the Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Regents.

Student Responsibilities

Student Responsibility to Register under Proper Classification - It is the student's responsibility to register under the proper tuition classification. If there is any question about the right to in-state tuition status, it is the student's obligation, prior to or at the time of registration, to raise the question with the administrative officials of the institution in which the student is registering to have tuition status officially determined. The burden rests with the student to submit the information and documentation necessary to support the argument for a particular tuition classification under Regents' regulations.

Notification of Change in Circumstances - A student who is classified as an in-state student must immediately notify the proper administrative officials of the institution of any change in residency status or any other change in circumstances, that may affect tuition classification.

Official Change of Tuition Status - Every student classified as out-of-state shall retain that status until such time that student has petitioned for reclassification in the form prescribed by the institution and is officially reclassified in writing as an in-state student by the proper administrative officers. No more than one application may be filed for a given semester.

Reclassification - Every student who has been granted in-state tuition, as a legal resident of Georgia shall be reclassified as an out-of-state student whenever anyone shall report, or there have been found to exist, circumstances indicating a change in legal residence to another state.

International Graduate Student Admissions

Students from countries other than the United States who intend to be in F-1 or J-1 student visa status must apply for admission through GC's International Education Center.

Prospective students may download admissions materials from the International Center website at www.gcsu.edu/international

Academic Standing

A graduate student will be placed on graduate academic probation if the student's institutional graduate grade point average falls below a 3.00 at any point during his or her graduate studies.

Each department that has a graduate program will develop a policy for progression in its graduate program, which it will publish in the Graduate Catalog. Students who fail to meet the requirements for progression in the graduate program will be placed on graduate academic dismissal, and will not be allowed to continue in the graduate program. All department decisions to place a student on graduate academic dismissal must be filed with the Registrar before the end of the add/drop period of the following semester of enrollment.

In order to be considered for readmission to the program, the student must successfully petition the graduate program coordinator and the Dean of the College in which the program resides.

Advising

The program coordinator, a professor, chair, or support staff (ex. Certification officer) who is designated to do so, are those who can advise a student. The Director of Graduate Programs in the College of Education and the appropriate department Chairperson are responsible for advising students in matters pertaining to teacher certification.

Course Load

A full-time course load for a graduate student is 9 semester hours each semester. **Nine semester hours is considered a full course load for graduate students and for Veteran's Certifications purposes.**

Students are encouraged to use their own judgment in deciding the course loads they will take each semester. The advice of the student's faculty advisor should be given serious consideration.

Students may take a maximum of 8 hours during each of the shorter, four-week summer parts of term.

Course Numbering

Courses numbered 5000 to 7999 are designed primarily for graduate students in Master and Specialist programs.

Courses numbered 8000 to 9999 are designed for Doctorate programs.

Courses are identified by a four-letter prefix designating area of study and a four-digit number.

A graduate student will not be permitted to take a graduate-level course with the same title/name of courses previously taken at the undergraduate level. Admission at the graduate level is a prerequisite for enrollment in graduate courses for graduate credit. Each graduate student is responsible for consulting with the appropriate faculty advisor for the completion of individual courses.

FERPA

Georgia College, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 which is designed to protect the student's rights with regard to educational records maintained by the institution. Under this Act, a student has the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational record within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.

Students should submit to the Registrar, Dean, and head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
3. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
4. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A

school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contacted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

5. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
6. Upon request, the University discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (FERPA) requires an institution to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the record request unless the institution states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.
7. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Georgia College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Graduate Opportunities

The Graduate School sponsors several opportunities for graduate students to engage in a range of activities, including student employment and research activities. Whether it is presenting research endeavors at professional conferences around the country or at the annual GCSU Research Day event, assisting a faculty member with instructional responsibilities, or performing professional tasks in an on-campus department as a graduate assistant, the opportunities provide added career and educational value. Discover more about these opportunities on The Graduate School website.

Graduate Graduation Requirements

To qualify for a graduate degree at Georgia College it is the student's responsibility satisfy the following requirements:

1. Satisfactorily complete the departmental requirements for the degree. These requirements are described in the degree programs section of this catalog.
2. Present formal application for graduate degree (form available in the Office of the Registrar, 107 Parks Hall or online <https://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/graduation-and-commencement>) by the deadline indicated in the Official University Calendar.
3. A graduate student must have a minimum institutional average of 3.0 GPA and minimum 3.0 GPA in the degree program. Only grades in courses numbered 5000 - 8999 shall be counted in a student's institutional grade point average. The

Georgia College transcript will reflect an institutional average of all work attempted at the University once a student enters a graduate classification.

4. A graduate student cannot earn less than a grade of C in any course to be counted for degree credit. Higher minimum course grade requirements are set for certain degree programs and are listed as program requirements in this catalog.
5. A graduate student must earn all credit applied to the planned program within the prescribed period of seven years after initial acceptance to the graduate program, unless noted otherwise under specific degree program requirements. The requirements for individual programs may vary. Please refer to the degree program sections of the catalog for individual program requirements.
6. A student planning to use transfer work to qualify for a degree must have official transcripts submitted to the Office of the Registrar no later than the beginning of the semester immediately preceding graduation exercises.
7. Georgia College reserves the right to refuse to forward transcripts for any student who has an unsatisfactory conduct record or who is in financial arrears to the University.
8. Students enrolled in degree programs requiring a thesis or final research paper must deposit the approved unbound original and one bound copy of their work in the Library and Instructional Technology Center. Other copies of the thesis or final research paper may be required by the department in which the major work has been done.

Graduation Regalia

Graduation marks the completion of all degree requirements and the official posting of the degree on a student's records. Graduation regalia is a significant aspect of the commencement ceremony, symbolizing the achievements of students. Graduates are encouraged to wear traditional caps and gowns, which can typically be purchased through the university's bookstore. In addition, many graduate students may choose to adorn their regalia with graduation stoles, which can represent various affiliations, honors, or cultural backgrounds. The Graduate School offers a special graduation stole exclusively for graduate students, allowing graduates to proudly highlight their achievement during commencement. The stoles are provided through the university bookstore.

Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of graduate assistantships are offered to departments with graduate degree programs and other administrative offices. Graduate assistants provide educationally beneficial assistance to the departments which award the assistantships.

Students are only eligible for the financial assistance provided by a graduate assistantship for two years (24 months) applicable to the completion of one graduate degree. Once a student has completed a graduate degree, whether that program of study requires one year or two, the student is no longer eligible for a graduate assistantship.

Categories of Graduate Assistantships

- **Administrative Graduate Assistants**
 - Support non-academic offices (i.e. Admissions, Athletics, Housing, Nursing, etc.) and are paid for by the hiring department. A listing of non-academic offices can be obtained from The Graduate School. Offices may differ annually.
- **Departmental Graduate Assistants**
 - Work directly in their graduate program of study (i.e. Accounting, Nursing, Music Therapy, etc.). A listing of department offices can be obtained from the dean's office of the four colleges – College of Arts & Sciences, College of Business & Technology, College of Education, and the College of Health Sciences.
- **Teaching Assistants**
 - Are graduate assistants specific to Biology, the MFA Creative Writing, and English graduate programs. After completing 18 hours of graduate-level work, teaching assistants teach lower-level courses and/or labs specific to Biology, creative writing, and english.

General Policies

To obtain a graduate assistantship a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Be approved for regular admission to a graduate degree program.
 - a. An applicant who has been determined by the coordinator of the program to have met all requirements for admission to a degree program as described in the degree program section of the catalog may be admitted as a regular graduate student.
2. Maintain academic good standing. If a student's grade point average falls below a 3.0 (academic warning), the student will have the next semester or summer term to improve and return to good standing before termination of the assistantship. Should a student fail to return to good standing after the next semester or summer term, or

should a student receive academic exclusion and be dismissed from the degree program, the assistantship will be terminated at once.

3. Earn a minimum of 6 semester hours during Fall and/or Spring of graduate coursework during the term in which the assistantship is held. Summer assistantships are limited and require 3 semester hours of graduate coursework.
4. Be covered under a health insurance plan. Students are billed for mandatory health insurance; however, this fee may be waived if the student is covered under an accepted plan. For more information, see the [Student Health Insurance Program](#) on the USG website. To fill out a waiver, contact the [Business Office](#) or visit the [UnitedHealthcare Student Center](#). Health insurance is required.
5. Attend Graduate Assistant Orientation and/or complete Graduate Assistant Orientation on GeorgiaView. The orientation is conducted by the GCSU Department of Human Resources.
6. Complete required trainings as an employee of Georgia College and State University.
7. GAs who will be listed as the Instructor of Record must have at least 18 graduate semester hours in the field (i.e. 2nd and 3rd year MFA students).

Assistantships are available for a maximum of 24 months applicable to the completion of one graduate degree (does not apply to MFA Creative Writing).

Benefits of an Assistantship

1. Tuition Remission
 - a. Assistantships cover all except \$25 of tuition costs. (GAs are responsible to pay all normal fees.) The GCSU Business Office oversees and publishes all tuition and fee rates.
2. Payment of a monthly/hourly stipend (amount varies based on department and responsibilities).
3. Learn valuable employment, professional, and/or research skills.

Work assignments

- The employing department supervisor sets the student's work schedule. The employee's supervisor will coordinate with the GA to ensure that their work schedule aligns with their class schedule.
- The hiring department provides specific duties and responsibilities.
- GAs will accurately report the number of hours worked each week. At the discretion of the GAs supervisor, a GA may make up hours missed due to illness or other absence.
- GAs work 19 hours per week for 15/16 weeks, in-person. Graduate assistants are not eligible for teleworking or remote work options. GAs begin employment on the first day of classes and end the last day of final exams (pending the schedule set with the supervisor).
- GAs are not obligated to work during official school breaks and holidays.

Expectations

As employees, GAs are expected to perform their assigned responsibilities and to support the unit or department to which they are assigned. GAs should follow standard rules of professional conduct, including:

Appearance. As a member of the Georgia College community, appearance is a reflection on the institution. Therefore, GAs are expected to dress appropriately and maintain proper hygiene for their appointment. What is considered appropriate may depend on the type of graduate assistantship and the nature of work in each circumstance and should be discussed with the graduate program coordinator. However, examples of attire that may not be deemed appropriate include: (1) spaghetti straps, halter tops, strapless, or tank tops; (2) clothing with any kind of stains or holes; (3) shorts or skirts well above the knee; (4) pants that show underwear; and (5) apparel from other institutions.

Etiquette. Proper manners and social behavior is mandatory for all GAs. Remember to shake hands when meeting new coworkers, peers, or guests. In addition, utilize titles such as —Mr., —Ms., or —Dr., and withhold overly personal conversations/information in the workplace.

Communication. Poor communication can create problems amongst co-workers and guests alike. It is imperative to communicate clearly concisely, and frequently with your major professor. Please consider the following tips: (1) verbal—speak with a positive tone, speak clearly and at an appropriate level; (2) non-verbal—be aware of your body language and personal hygiene; and (3) written—aim to be concise and remember to proofread everything. Social media is another growing form of communication. Facebook, X, Instagram, and other social media sites are forbidden during work hours. Additionally, no negative posts should be made regarding GC while employed by the institution.

Responsibility. If granted a graduate assistantship, one will enter a professional workplace. As such, it is important GAs are accountable for individual actions, decisions, and choices within the work setting. Be aware that generating trust among coworkers is important. If you claim you will complete something, be sure it is completed well and in a timely manner.

Confidentiality. GAs are, in some capacity, privy to sensitive student and personnel information. Therefore, all non-directory information outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is expected to be protected and only discussed in the appropriate workplace setting. Violations to FERPA are grounds for immediate termination. Additionally, it is inappropriate to discuss university personnel issues with students.

Competency. All GAs will be provided training for their position but it is the responsibility of the GA to acquire competency with assigned tasks. Questions and note-taking are encouraged for accurate training results.

Relationships. Demonstrating a level of respect to any individual located on the GC campus is essential.

Sexual Harassment

Graduate assistants must follow strict professional guidelines regarding gender rights and equality. The University is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff have equal access to the University's institutional and educational benefits, regardless of one's sex. There are certain factors in the University environment that, if permitted, contribute to an interference with access of these benefits, including degrading comments based on one's gender, or of one race by another, sexual harassment, discrimination, and the injection of romantic or sexual overtones into relationships where there are differences in the power between the people involved. This statement summarizes the laws, regulations, and policies applicable to you.

Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Sexual harassment is unwelcome and discriminatory speech or conduct undertaken because of an individual's gender that is so severe, persistent or pervasive and is subjectively and objectively offensive that it has the systematic effect of unreasonably interfering with or depriving someone of educational, institutional, or employment access, benefits, activities, or opportunities.

Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment includes conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive and is subjectively and objectively offensive that it alters the conditions of education or employment or institutional benefits of a reasonable person with the same characteristics of the victim of the harassing conduct. Whether conduct is harassing is based upon an examination of the totality of the circumstances, including but not limited to:

- a. the frequency of the conduct;
- b. the nature and severity of the conduct;
- c. whether the conduct was physically threatening;
- d. whether the conduct was deliberate, repeated humiliation based upon sex;
- e. the effect of the conduct on the alleged victim's mental or emotional state from the perspective of a reasonable person;
- f. whether the conduct was directed at more than one person;
- g. whether the conduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct;
- h. continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, such as gratuitous suggestive comments and sexually explicit jokes; and
- i. whether the speech or conduct deserves constitutional protections.

Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment exists when individuals in positions of authority over the complainant:

- make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; and
- indicate, explicitly or implicitly, that failure to submit to or the rejection of such conduct will result in adverse educational or employment action or where participation in an educational program

or institutional activity or benefit is conditioned upon the complainant's submission to such activity.

Examples of Sexual Harassment

Where the totality of the circumstances viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person demonstrate a severe and pervasive interference with educational or employment rights, sexual harassment may exist in instances that can include:

- Suggesting, even if in a "joke," that your schoolwork could be lessened or a grade evaluation be raised if you spend time socially or romantically with the person.
- Any pressure for sex, any threat to punish for refusing.
- Any remarks about clothing, body, or activities that could be construed as sexual, either in appreciation or as a put-down.
- Insulting sounds, suggestive whistling.
- Intimidating, angry, loud, or insulting language where someone feels frightened (note: this is verbal violence, rather than physical).
- Jokes about sex or gender.
- Inappropriate touching or feeling, attempted kissing or fondling, assault.
- Leering, obscene gestures, exposing of body.
- Displaying sexually explicit or sexually derogatory cartoons, photos, drawings, calendars, posters, T- shirts.
- Saying or "joking" that, for example, women cannot learn this material or run this instrument as quickly or as well as men.

Unethical Romantic Behavior

Under no circumstances should a GA become romantically or sexually involved with a student while that student is enrolled in his or her classes. If a GA becomes involved with a student who is not in his/her classes, the GA must ensure protection of the student's professional future from possible prejudicial consequences resulting from the relationship. See Section 3.2.9 of the Regents Policy Manual and the Faculty and Staff Handbooks. Regardless of who initiates the relationship, do not suggest or cultivate any romantic activity with any student you are teaching or supervising. Nonetheless, if a romance arises between you and one of your students, tell your instructor/supervisor immediately. The student should be transferred to another GA or the GA should be removed and replaced by another. However, disciplinary measures may still be imposed against you for permitting the romance to arise while you were in a GA position, up to and including removal of your GA duties and privileges.

Applying for a Graduate Assistantship

Students in the MS Biology, MFA Creative Writing, and MA English should contact the [graduate coordinator](#) for their program for specific information.

All other students:

- Visit www.gcsu.edu and select Jobs from the top right menu.
- Click "View All Employment Opportunities."

- If necessary, filter “Business Unit” to “Georgia College & State Univ” and choose “Part-Time” to search for open positions.

Students who are currently employed by GCSU can follow the steps:

- Log in to MY.GCSU.EDU.
- Click OneUSG Connect.
- Click Georgia College icon.
- Click Recruiting Self Service.
- Click Apply for Jobs.
- Click View all Jobs.
 - From the “Search Jobs” screen, you can click “Graduate Assistant” to find positions available.

A Job Aid for Students can be found on the Student & Graduate Assistant Hiring Documents page.

Chosen applicants will receive an offer letter and HR documentation by email. The offer letter should outline: 1. the duration of the assistantship; 2. the stipend amount; 3. hours associated with the assistantship; and 4. a brief description of the duties to be performed.

Stipends

Stipends vary based on the nature of the GA position and effective start date. Obligations and the salary offer are explicitly communicated by the hiring department prior to a contract agreement and specified in the offer letter. These positions may also be affected by the length of the contract and responsibilities associated with the appointment. Graduate Assistants payroll dates and breakdown are determined by Payroll Services.

Health Insurance

Graduate assistants are **required** to carry health insurance. *GAs will automatically be charged for the USG Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP).* If covered under a policy by a parent, spouse, company, or organization on the approved waiver list, the GA can waive out. The Business Office sends emails on how to waive out of this charge.

Ending an Assistantship

There are several reason a student’s graduate assistantship ends:

- The student is graduating.
- The student has reached the maximum time allowed (i.e. 24 months).
- The student wants to resign.
 - Students should work with their supervisor on any issues that arise before leaving a position. Resigning a position may affect future positions.
 - If not satisfied or a resolution cannot be reached, the student should submit a resignation letter to the supervisor and to the coordinator of the student’s degree program.
 - If a student resigns, the student’s tuition will be prorated as of the last day worked and added to their account. The stipend will also be prorated as of the last day worked.

- Termination
 - A student may be terminated from a graduate assistantship for any of the following:
 - Suspension or dismissal from the university for disciplinary reasons
 - The student's course load drops below 6 hours in fall or spring or 3 hours in summer.
 - The student does not maintain academic good standing. If a student's grade point average falls below a 3.00 (academic warning), the student will have the next semester or summer term to improve and return to good standing before termination of the assistantship. Should a student fail to return to good standing after the next semester or summer term, or should a student receive academic exclusion and be dismissed from the degree program, the assistantship will be terminated at once.
 - The student does not perform work assignments at a satisfactory level.



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

Graduate Assistant Performance Evaluation

Purpose – This form is intended for reviewing the performance of graduate assistants to facilitate communication between graduate assistants and their directing faculty, the growth of graduate assistants, and identifying areas that may need improvement. This form will also provide a basis for the establishment of employment decisions.

Student Name _____ GCID _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Review Period From: _____ To: _____

Employing Area: _____

ASSISTANTSHIP ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Specify the type of assistantship (GA/TA/RA) and list primary responsibilities.

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PERFORMANCE RATING CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS

Exceptional (5)	Performance consistently far exceeds expectations. Performance is characterized by exceptionally high work quality. Student repeatedly make contributions which are far above the requirements of their position.
Highly Successful (4)	Performance goals are met. Performance indicates thorough attention and detail to the completion of all assigned responsibilities. Student initiative is regularly displayed.
Satisfactory (3)	Performance meets the requirements and standard expectations of the position. The position is covered in an adequate manner and responsibilities handled competently
Needs Development (2)	Performance does not consistently meet all expectations of the position. Supervisor can identify areas for improvement.

Unacceptable (1)	Performance does not meet minimum expectations for the position. Supervisor can identify areas of deficiency.
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COMPREHENSION OF DUTIES AND JOB KNOWLEDGE

Possesses and demonstrates technical, functional, or other specific knowledge and the skill level required to complete assignments efficiently and effectively.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

TEAMWORK

Cooperates and collaborates with colleagues as appropriate; works in partnership with others; contributes to a welcoming environment and respects individual differences.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Works well with supervising faculty, other faculty, staff, other graduate assistants and students (as appropriate to the position) and is receptive to others' ideas; gives, receives, and acts upon constructive feedback.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Prioritizes, plans and implements work efficiently and productively, and effectively manages resources (labor, time, materials, etc.).

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Proficient and professional in oral and written communication; communicates effectively.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

INITIATIVE

Takes initiative in problem solving; is self-directed, when necessary.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

JUDGEMENT

Analyzes problems effectively; determines appropriate courses of action for solutions; makes clear, consistent and timely decisions while acting with integrity.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AND PROFESSIONALISM

Exhibits ethical behavior, adhering to accepted standards of professional behavior and appropriate codes of conduct.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

RELIABILITY AND ATTENDANCE

Completes assigned tasks reliably, completes task follow-up, and is punctual and meets attendance expectations.

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/AREAS OF STRENGTH AND GROWTH**IF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES ARE INCLUDED, COMPLETE SECTION AS APPROPRIATE**

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

IF RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES ARE INCLUDED, COMPLETE SECTION AS APPROPRIATE

Performance Rating	Supportive Details or Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> 5- Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Highly Successful <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Needs Development <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Unacceptable	

Provide work-related goals and expectations for upcoming evaluation period

Provide work-related goals and expectations for upcoming evaluation period

Graduate assistant feedback

As the student, please provide any areas of strengths and/or opportunities of the assistantship.

Supervisor's Signature _____

Student Signature _____

☐ I agree ☐ I do not agree with this evaluation

Graduate Program Coordinator Signature: _____

Department Chair/Director Signature: _____

Upon receipt of all signatures, please share a copy with the Graduate School office.

Documenting Hours for Payroll

Graduate assistants are employees of GCSU and must enter hours worked. Complete the appropriate timesheet in the OneUSG system and other tracking systems as required by individual departments. OneUSG is accessible through My.gcsu.edu. Contact the GCSU Office of Human Resources for access to OneUSG and see Appendix A for more information.

Additional Resources

Human Resources & Payroll Services

GCSU Office of Human Resources
Wooten-Garner House
Campus Box 028
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061
Phone: 478-445-5596
Email: hr@gcsu.edu
Website: <https://www.gcsu.edu/humanresources>

Payroll Office
Parks Hall, Suite 207
Campus Box 036
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061
Phone: 478-445-6096
Email: payroll@gcsu.edu

Local Food Assistance

- GCSU has a food pantry on the first floor of the Student Activity Center (Liberty Street side)
Contact Amy Whatley, Director of Student Care and Outreach, at amy.whatley@gcsu.edu or 478-445-7535, for more information.
- [Chard Wray Food Pantry](#) located at 472 Broad St in Milledgeville, Georgia.
- [Café Central Milledgeville](#) 500 Underwood Rd in Milledgeville, Georgia. Tuesdays 11:00am-1:00pm

Supervisors

Job Description/Duties

Administrative GAs Support non-academic offices (i.e. Admissions, Athletics, Housing, Nursing, etc.) and are paid for by the hiring department. A listing of non-academic offices can be obtained from The Graduate School. Offices may differ annually. Examples of duties may include clerical support, research, data entry, event planning, etc.

Departmental GAs Work directly in their graduate program of study (i.e. Accounting, Nursing, Music Therapy, etc.). A listing of department offices can be obtained from the dean's office of the four colleges – College of Arts & Sciences, College of Business & Technology, College of Education, and the College of Health Sciences. Examples of duties may include performing research, tutoring, etc.

Teaching Assistants Are graduate assistants specific to Biology, the MFA Creative Writing, and English graduate programs. After completing 18 hours of graduate-level work, teaching assistants teach lower-level courses and/or labs specific to Biology, creative writing, english, and may teach or tutor in the Writing Center.

***Requesting an Administrative* (non-academic offices)**

Graduate Assistant

Administrative Graduate Assistant positions are limited. Stipends are paid by the hiring department.

Request for an Administrative Graduate Assistant for the following academic/fiscal year **open in October of each year** with a deadline to apply of **December 15. Departments must submit an** online request to be considered for an Administrative Graduate “Assistant

The online submission form and information can be found on the [Graduate Assistants](#) page of The Graduate School site.

Hiring a Graduate Assistant

Information on hiring a Graduate Assistant can be found on the Office of Human Resources webpage: [Student & Graduate Assistant Hiring Documents](#)

Articles for Supervisors

Supervising Your Graduate Assistants

Supervision is Selfless: Four things to keep in mind when supervising Graduate Assistant