



# Graduate Associate Appointment Document

The Ohio State University is pleased to offer an opportunity while you are pursuing your graduate degree for you to gain valuable professional experience and to contribute in significant ways to the University's academic, research, and service missions. This document gives important information about your graduate associate (GA) appointment but does not supersede applicable Graduate School policies, University rules, or federal and state laws, which change from time to time. Graduate students and graduate programs should consult the [Graduate School Handbook](#), particularly Section IX, for Graduate School rules and policies pertaining to graduate students.

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Academic Unit (Graduate Program)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appointing Unit:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Unit's Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Contact Person, if Applicable:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address/Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Administrative Contact Person, if Applicable:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address/Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The University is required by federal law to verify the citizenship and work authorization of all new appointees. This appointment is contingent on such verification.

**Appointment Title(s):**

Graduate Research Associate     Graduate Administrative Associate     Graduate Teaching Associate

Note: Graduate students for whom English is not the first language must certify their proficiency in spoken English before assuming GTA duties involving direct student contact. Consult Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#).

**Average Load (Hours/Week):** \_\_\_\_\_ which equals the following percent Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) \_\_\_\_\_

Note: GRAs should see item 3 of the enclosed information sheet. International graduate students must comply with regulations for their visa category; additional information is available from the [Office of International Education](#).

**Estimated Monthly Stipend:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ Months = Estimated Total Stipend of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Tuition and Fees:** GA appointments of at least 50 percent FTE include a full tuition and fee authorization covering covering all instructional and general fees, including nonresident fees, and the technology (learning) fee. GA appointments at 25 percent FTE include one-half of instructional and general fees, including nonresident fees. The university also subsidizes the cost of student health insurance for eligible individuals.

**Fees Covered for This Appointment in Addition to Fee Authorization for Tuition and Fees:**

No additional fees are covered. All other fees are the responsibility of the graduate associate (See note below).

The following additional fees are covered if checked:

COTA bus pass fee     Student activity fee     Recreational facility fee (RPAC)  
 Student Union (future fee)     Other department or college specific fees, as listed below:

**Note:** Effective Autumn Quarter 2009, the Office of Human Resources implemented a Payroll Deduction Payment Plan for graduate students supported as graduate associates, fellows, and trainees who are paid through the university payroll system. This plan allows these graduate students to pay "Other Student Fees" via a monthly payroll deduction. Graduate associates must provide authorization to participate in this plan. Please consult your appointing unit's Human Resource Professional for further information.





# Graduate Associate Appointment Document

### Required Orientation/Training for Appointment:

- Campus report date, if applicable: \_\_\_\_\_
- Report date to Office of International Education, if applicable: \_\_\_\_\_
- Orientation/Training information is  attached  posted at \_\_\_\_\_
- No required orientation/training.

### Acceptance of Terms

Date by which a signed copy of this document must be returned:

**Note:** Failure to return a signed copy by this date will be considered a rejection of the appointment. The position may then be offered to another graduate student. Retain one signed copy for your records. Return the other copy to the appointing unit at the address listed on the first page of this document.

I understand and agree to the terms and conditions of this appointment as described above and in the attached document(s), and I accept this appointment. I understand that I am responsible for informing current and potential appointing units about any existing or possible concurrent appointments in the university.

I decline this appointment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature(s), authorized for appointing unit

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature(s), authorized for appointing unit

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature(s), authorized for appointing unit

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Graduate Associate Appointment Document

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Graduate associate appointment policies and procedures are formulated by the Graduate School through the Graduate Council, the Graduate School, the Office of Human Resources, the appointing unit, and the graduate studies committee of the student's academic unit. Graduate associates are expected to be familiar with all relevant policies, including those in the [Graduate School Handbook](#), particularly Section IX. The Graduate School policies and rules consulted the most are summarized below.

1. **Percent Time and Load.** The majority of GAs are appointed at 50 percent time (an average load of 20 hours per week over the duration of the appointment period). Appointments at other percentages are prorated according to this equation.
2. **Duration of Appointment.** A GA appointment may be terminated prior to the end of the appointment period for the reasons listed in Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#). Early termination of the appointment requires the written approval of the Graduate School.

3. **Duties.** The specific duties of GA positions are determined by appointing units.

**Note for GRA Appointments:**

Graduate Research Associate (GRA) appointments fall into two broad categories:

- a. GRAs on 50 percent appointments should spend approximately 20 hours per week on their appointment duties when they are supporting faculty research that is not directly related to their dissertations or theses.
  - b. For many GRAs, their appointment duties overlap with research for their own dissertations or master's theses. In these cases, it is difficult to separate the number of hours devoted specifically to the associateship. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to clarify expectations, including policies related to publication and intellectual ownership.
4. **Stipend.** The university establishes minimum stipends for GAs. Within the university's stipend policies, appointing units determine stipend levels, guided by such factors as levels of responsibility, years of experience, degree progress, previous GA performance, and stipend levels at peer institutions.
  5. **Verification of Eligibility for Employment (I-9).** The university is required by federal law to verify the citizenship and work authorization of all new appointees, and GA appointments are contingent on such verification.
  6. **Paperless Pay and Other Payroll Matters.** The two main options for being paid are direct deposit and a special "payroll card," which is similar to a debit card. GAs should select the option that works best for them by accessing the information posted at [www.hr.osu.edu/payroll/](http://www.hr.osu.edu/payroll/). Whenever there is a change in the GA's status that affects the tax deduction, name, or W-2 tax mailing address, the GA must fill out a W-4 (tax withholding) form available from the appointing unit or the Office of Human Resources.
  7. **Fee Authorization.** Every GA appointment for at least 50 percent of full time receives a full tuition and fee authorization covering all instructional and general fees, including nonresident fees, and the technology (learning fee). This also applies to GAs having multiple appointments that cumulatively equal or exceed 50 percent. One-half of instructional and general fees, including nonresident fees, are covered for 25 percent GA appointments.
  8. **Benefits.** Additional information is available in the [Graduate Associate Booklet](#), available from the Office of Human Resources.

## Graduate Associate Appointment Document

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9. **Withdrawal/Disenrollment.** A GA who is considering withdrawal should discuss the timing of the withdrawal and possible forfeiture fees with his/her advisor, supervisor, and/or graduate studies office. Other possible consequences should be discussed with the relevant office. Effects on health insurance coverage and subsidy, for instance, should be determined with the Student Health Insurance Office, the appointing unit's fiscal/human resources officer, and others as appropriate. Visa implications for international students should be reviewed with the Office of International Education.

If a graduate associate chooses to leave (withdraw) from the university or is suspended or dismissed, the GA will be billed for the prorated value of the tuition and fees billed during the quarter in question. The prorated value is based on the university's tuition and fee refund schedule (follow the "important dates" link at [www.ureg.ohio-state.edu](http://www.ureg.ohio-state.edu)). If, for example, an unfunded student withdraws from the university during the second week of the quarter, that student would be eligible for an 80 percent refund of tuition and fees paid. Since GAs on 50 percent appointments do not pay their own tuition and fees, a GA on a 50 percent appointment in a similar situation would be responsible for the 20 percent of the tuition and fees forfeited by the GA sponsor because of the withdrawal.

10. **Health Insurance.** Columbus-campus-based, degree-seeking graduate students who are enrolled at least half-time are required to carry health insurance as a condition of enrollment. All students, including regional campus students, are automatically enrolled in the [Student Health Insurance Plan](#) (SHIP) upon registration, unless the student obtains a waiver by the required deadline. GAs may elect instead to enroll in Prime Care Advantage. Enrollment must be completed no later than 31 days after the beginning of the GA's appointment in the first quarter of the qualifying appointment each year and must remain in effect for the remainder of the academic year. A GA must also complete the [Prime Care Advantage enrollment form](#) and waive the SHIP coverage by the applicable deadline in order to enroll in Prime Care Advantage. Additional information is available in the [Graduate Associates Booklet](#), available from the [Office of Human Resources](#).

**Note for International Students:** International students are required to enroll in the SHIP unless covered under a government sponsor, select international organization, or are a covered dependent of a U.S.-based employee. Additional information is posted at <http://shi.osu.edu/index.asp>.

11. **Health Insurance Subsidy.** The University pays 85 percent toward the GA's health insurance coverage and 85 percent toward dependent coverage if the GA - and, if applicable, the GA's dependent(s) - enrolls in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). The subsidy amount will also be applied toward Prime Care Advantage premiums if the GA (and the GA's dependents, if applicable) decides to enroll in Prime Care Advantage instead of SHIP. This subsidy applies to GAs who have an appointment of at least 50 percent (or multiple appointments that cumulatively equal or exceed 50 percent) and are paid through the Ohio State payroll system. See Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#) and the [Graduate Associates Booklet](#).
12. **Retirement.** All GAs are eligible to participate in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). GTAs who have established membership with the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS), based on other Ohio teaching service, may elect either to continue contributions to that system or to request STRS membership exemption. Exemptions from either system must be made within 31 days of the first day of the appointment. Additional information about eligibility, exemptions, and contributions is available in Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#). All GAs are also eligible to contribute to voluntary 403(b) or 457 retirement accounts, which allow additional retirement dollars to be contributed on a pretax basis.

## Graduate Associate Appointment Document

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- 13. Additional Fees.** Unless agreed to be covered by the GA's appointing unit, each GA is responsible for paying all additional fees: the COTA bus pass fee; the student activity fee; the recreational facility fee; **student union fees**; and any other department/college specific-fees.
- Note:** Effective Autumn Quarter 2009, the Office of Human Resources implemented a Payroll Deduction Payment Plan for graduate students supported as graduate associates, fellows, and trainees who are paid through the university payroll system. This plan allows these graduate students to pay "Other Student Fees" via a monthly payroll deduction.
- 14. Other Charges.** Each GA is responsible for other miscellaneous fees, such as athletic ticket fees and any penalties or late fees that he or she incurs.
- 15. Parking Permits.** GAs may purchase "C" (student) or "B" (staff) parking permits for Central or West Campus. GAs are responsible for fees associated with the level of pass purchased as well as any other charges related to parking.
- 16. Fourth Quarter Fee Authorization.** Students who have held regular GA appointments for a minimum of three consecutive quarters on a 50 percent or greater appointment are entitled to a full fee authorization during the immediately following quarter without being on appointment. A graduate student who elects not to enroll during the immediately following quarter may not defer the use of the fourth quarter fee authorization.

**Note for 25 Percent GA Appointments:** Students who have held regular GA appointments for a minimum of three consecutive quarters on an appointment between 25 percent and 49 percent are entitled to a one-half fee authorization during the immediately following quarter without being on appointment, as detailed in Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#). GAs who have multiple appointments that cumulatively equal or exceed 50 percent for a minimum of three consecutive quarters are entitled to a full fee authorization during the immediately following quarter without being on appointment, as detailed in the section identified above. A graduate student who elects not to enroll during the immediately following quarter may not defer the use of the fourth quarter fee authorization.

- 17. Time Off.** Rules regarding time off during quarter breaks or other times are determined by the appointing unit. When university offices must maintain services on university holidays and GAs are scheduled to work, they must be given the equivalent time off on another day.
- 18. Short-Term Absences and Leaves of Absence.** GAs may request time off to manage personal and/or family illness, bereavement, childbirth, and adoption.
- 19. Military Leave.** Information is available in Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#).
- 20. Academic Requirements.** A pre-candidacy student must be enrolled for a minimum of 9 credits each quarter (7 for summer) in order to hold a graduate associateship appointment. A post-candidacy student must be enrolled for 3 credits each quarter, including summer, in order to hold an associateship appointment. A GA must also maintain reasonable progress toward the degree and maintain good academic standing with the Graduate School and his/her academic program each quarter.

**Note for GA Appointments Below 50 Percent:** A student on a GA appointment below 50 percent must enroll for a minimum of 7 credit hours each quarter, make reasonable progress toward the degree, and maintain good academic standing with the Graduate School and his/her academic program each quarter. GAs who have multiple appointments that cumulatively equal or exceed 50 percent have greater registration requirements, as described above.

21. **Additional GA Appointments or Employment.** A GA may not hold an appointment for more than 75 percent FTE, whether as a single appointment or combination of appointments, without the prior approval of the Graduate School. GAs should consult with their graduate advisors and/or supervisors before engaging in employment outside the university to ensure that these additional commitments would not interfere with their academic progress or GA responsibilities.
22. **Fellowship Appointments Held Concurrently with GA Appointments:** A GA who wishes to accept a concurrent fellowship appointment may do so upon the petition of the GA's graduate studies committee and the written approval of the Graduate School, provided the GA appointment does not exceed 25 percent and all other conditions for holding GA and fellowship appointments are met.
23. **Supervisor.** A GA should be informed in writing about the name(s) of the person(s) who will oversee GA responsibilities.
24. **Training.** Most training requirements are established by units appointing graduate associates. The university requires that all Graduate Teaching Associates receive a baseline of preparation and ongoing support for their teaching. GTAs must be notified by their appointing units when they are required to attend training provided through the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching, the appointing unit, or another office. Specific requirements apply to International Teaching Associates. (See Section IX of the [Graduate School Handbook](#). See also the May 13, 2003, memo from the provost about GTA preparation and ongoing support, posted at <http://oaa.osu.edu/Reports/gta/index.html>.)
25. **Graduate Student Codes of Conduct and Research Ethics.** Graduate students are expected to learn, respect, and abide by the professional codes of ethics and responsibilities of the university and those commonly accepted in the student's field of study or area of research. These codes include but are not limited to the [Graduate Student Code of Research and Scholarly Conduct](#) and the university's [Code of Student Conduct](#).
26. **Intellectual Property and Other Research Policies.** GAs should be familiar with Ohio State's policies on intellectual property, including copyrights and, when applicable, patents. GAs should work with their supervisors from the beginning of their appointments to clarify the relationship of their work to intellectual property and other research policy issues. Research policies are posted by the [Office of Research](#).
27. **Performance Expectations.** Units that appoint GAs are expected to provide information in writing about GA duties and responsibilities. GA-appointing units are also expected to inform GAs in writing about the criteria and procedures for evaluating and reporting GA performance, including information about the Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) form and other student evaluations.
28. **Renewal of Appointment.** Appointment renewals are contingent on many factors, including the availability of funds and need for services as well as the student's prior satisfactory performance as a GA, satisfactory progress toward degree completion, and good standing in the Graduate School. Renewal is not guaranteed.

- 29. Nondiscrimination.** As stated in the [Office of Human Resources Policy 1.10](#), “The Ohio State University is committed to building a diverse faculty and staff for employment and promotion to ensure the highest quality workforce, to reflect human diversity, and to improve opportunities for minorities and women. The university embraces human diversity and is committed to equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and eliminating discrimination. This commitment is both a moral imperative consistent with an intellectual community that celebrates individual differences and diversity, as well as a matter of law. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.” This policy applies to all GAs.
- 30. Problem-Solving.** Regular, clear communication between GAs and their advisors and supervisors is essential to establishing and maintaining an effective work environment. Should problems related to a GA appointment arise, it is generally preferable to settle them at the local level. If, however, talking with an advisor or immediate supervisor does not resolve a problem or potential grievance, a GA should consult program handbooks and other materials provided by the appointing unit to learn about problem-solving approaches and grievance guidelines that may be in place. GAs may also seek assistance from graduate program chairs, heads of appointing units, or Graduate School staff. There may be instances in which recourse to these individuals does not lead to resolution. The Graduate Council has established grievance procedures, which are printed in Appendix C of the [Graduate School Handbook](#).
- 31. Workers' Compensation.** GAs are protected by the provisions of the Ohio Workers' Compensation Law.
- 32. Unemployment Compensation.** Because a graduate associateship is a student position, GAs are not eligible for unemployment benefits when their appointments end.