



Nichols College

*Learn. Lead. Succeed.*

## **GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

Nichols College  
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## PHILOSOPHY

Graduate Assistants (GAs) at Nichols College are, first and foremost, graduate students pursuing an education. The opportunity to work with staff in administrative environments is an integral aspect of the overall learning experience.

Graduate students who hold assistantships benefit educationally and professionally. They enhance their experience in leadership and expand interpersonal skills. Skills learned in these roles prepare students for a wide variety of professional opportunities post-graduation.

Assistantships also provide graduate students with the financial resources necessary to pursue their degrees. This financial support, tuition remission, is part of the College's mission to expand the education for our graduate students.

Nichols College is committed to ensuring that graduate assistant positions are beneficial to both the student as well as the department the assistant works for. This guideline is subject to change without notice.

## APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST FOR DIRECTOR(S)

1. Director(s) need to complete the job requisition form from Human Resources.
2. Upon Human Resources approval, the Director(s) then posts the position to Paycom. **ALL** Graduate Assistant positions *must* be posted to Paycom for fair and equal opportunities. A link of all open positions will also be on the Graduate Professional Studies Website.
3. When the Director(s) are ready to bring in candidates, the applicants will go through an interview process conducted by the Director(s) of the department.
4. The applicant *must* apply for admission into the Graduate School before any other steps are taken by the Director(s). An offer by the Director(s) **does not** constitute an admittance to the position until the applicant is accepted into the Graduate Program.
5. Once the applicant is accepted into the Graduate Program and sends the Director(s) their acceptance letter, then the Director(s) will forward the acceptance letter to April Girardin in Human Resources.
6. Upon Human Resources approval, the Director(s) may then offer the position to the candidate. Human Resources will then send the offer letter to the applicant.
7. Guide your Graduate Assistant to continue the hiring process with the steps listed in the *APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANT* section of these guidelines.

## APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANT

1. **Before** the candidate is interviewed by the Director(s), they will need to apply for admission into the Graduate School and be accepted. An offer from the Director(s) **does not** constitute an admittance to the position until accepted into the Graduate School.
2. Apply to an open Graduate Assistant position on the Graduate School website.

3. How to apply for admission into the Graduate program:
  - i. Complete the application at <https://slate.nichols.edu/register/graduate>
  - ii. In the application, the applicant must note that they are applying for a graduate position and note the department they are applying for.
  - iii. Any questions throughout the application process should be directed to the Graduate School.
  - iv. If you graduated from Nichols, you will **only** need to submit a personal statement and resume. The GPS counselor will obtain your transcript and omit letters of recommendations. If you are not a Nichols College grad, please follow the standard application procedures listed on the website.
4. If the candidate is admitted into the program, congratulations! The candidate will then need to forward the acceptance letter to the Director(s) of the department they applied for. The Director(s) will then reach out to Human Resources to share the acceptance and continue the hiring process.
5. Once Human Resources receives the acceptance letter, the Director(s) will either offer or defer the applicant the assistantship position. If offered the assistantship, Human Resources will send the candidate a welcome email, an offer letter, and the next steps in the hiring process.
6. Human Resources Hiring Process Includes:
7. Complete the Paycom Part Time New Hire Checklist. Human Resources will send the link to the Graduate Assistant's email.
8. Graduate Classes Registration:
  - i. A GPS counselor will reach out to the Graduate Assistant to set up an appointment to go over program requirements and schedules.
  - ii. Dual Degrees and Certificates are permitted on a departmental basis. Consult with your Director(s) for approval.
  - iii. At the beginning of each academic session, a \$175 technology fee (subject to change) will be due and can be paid via the Self- Service Financial tab located on OneLogin or Student Financial Services.
  - iv. The summer before the Graduate Assistant starts classes, all students will be required to attend an Orientation session, which will be hosted by a GPS counselor.
  - v. The GPS program automatically enrolls the student in classes throughout their program duration.

## ADMINISTRATION

Graduate Assistants at Nichols College are under the direct supervision of the Director(s) of that department that offers the appointment. The Director(s) determines the GA's assignment and supervises his or her work. The Director(s) is the primary source of information for the details of the position.

## **PERFORMANCE AND ASSISTANTSHIP REVIEWS**

The Director(s) of each department will conduct a performance review at the end of each academic year on their Graduate Assistant where the results of reviews will be discussed with the Graduate Assistant and shared with Human Resources to be documented in the assistant's file.

Graduate Assistants will have the opportunity to take a survey and evaluate the assistantship experience each year during the last session of classes in the spring. Assistants will be asked to describe the activities in which they have been engaged as an assistant and how they have benefited from the experiences. This evaluation will help the department classify the strengths and weakness of its program.

## **RENEWAL AND NON-RENEWAL OF APPOINTMENT**

Nichols College does not guarantee an appointment as a Graduate Assistant will be renewed each year. Although appointments are often renewed, the College cannot promise and there can be no expectancy that a graduate assistantship will be continued for the duration of two years.

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

As a Graduate Assistant, they must maintain a 3.0 GPA and are governed by all Graduate Professional Studies academic policies.

## **TERMINATION AND WITHDRAWALS**

Failure to perform duties assigned in a satisfactory manner, or failure to comply with academic/college policies may result in the termination of the assistantship. If a Graduate Assistant's appointment is terminated in the middle of a term, the tuition for that class will be prorated for the weeks worked as a graduate assistant. The GA will then be responsible for the remaining tuition for their program.

Resignation from any graduate appointment must be communicated in writing to the Human Resources department and countersigned by the Graduate Assistant's Director(s).

## **DUTIES AND TIME COMMITMENTS**

Workload expectations of the department and working hours should be explicit and clear.

Departments are to provide work assignments that GAs can satisfactorily complete in no more than a 20-hour average work week. The actual number of hours required to complete assignments in any given week may vary per department.

GAs follow the Academic school calendar. Consequently, if the campus is closed (for any reason), GAs who normally would work those days will not be required to make up the hours missed.

## **EXTRA WORK OPPORTUNITIES AND HOURS**

Graduate Assistants, in addition to their 20 hours per week worked for their assistantship, may work for another area on campus at no more than 9.50 hours per week. These 9.50 additional hours must not interfere with the assistantship position. 29.50 hours per week and 59 hours per pay period, is the maximum a Graduate Assistant may work.

## **TUITION REMISSION AND FEES**

The tuition remission to GAs does not cover any additional hours or fees, which includes the mandatory technology fee of \$175 per session (subject to change). Meal plans are available to Graduate Assistant's for \$60 (subject to change), which includes 10 swipes to Lombard Dining Hall. In addition, based on a first come, first serve basis, housing opportunities are available to GAs for a rent fee of \$125 (subject to change) per pay period. See the *GA Housing Application and Agreement* policy for more information.

## **BENEFITS AND PAY**

Graduate Assistants do not receive benefits. They will accrue 1- hour sick time per 30 hours they work based on the MA sick time policy.

All non- athletic Graduate Assistants will be paid on an hourly basis, where overtime pay is available based on the departments' discretion. Athletic Graduate Assistants who are coaches are paid on a stipend basis.

Taxes and rent (if applicable) will be deducted on a per pay period basis.

## **CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

GAs are held to the standard of both Student Life and Human Resources.

Violation of regulations constitutes a basis for disciplinary action in accordance with procedures set forth in the Nichols College Student Handbook, regarding residential concerns, and the Employee Handbook, for department related misconducts.

Any residential misconducts will be handled through the Residence Life department and brought to the attention of the Director(s) of your department as well as Human Resources. Misconduct could lead to termination of employment; however, the student could remain in their graduate program at their expense.

GAs may interact with other undergraduate and graduate students. It is expected as a GA to use discretion in all situations that may possibly jeopardize the department the GA works for or the reputation of the institution.

## **FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

If a Graduate Assistant has a problem, he or she should review the issue with the Department Supervisor.

If the grievance concerns the immediate supervisor, the Graduate Assistant should review the grievance with the appropriate Vice President of their division where necessary steps will be taken to resolve the grievance.

## **DIRECTOR DUTIES**

The Director(s) is responsible to keep track of the Graduate Assistant's earnings to ensure it does not go over the annual budget.

The integration of the assistantship responsibilities and academic program must be carefully coordinated and monitored by the Director(s) of the Graduate Assistant. Graduate Assistants should be assigned space, supplies, and equipment to carry out their assignments effectively.

## **HOUSING**

Housing is not guaranteed for any Graduate Assistant. All inquiries are determined on a first come first serve basis through the Division of Student Life. If the Graduate Assistant chooses to live on campus, they must adhere to all the policies set in place in the Residential Life Housing Policy. Summer housing availability is based off the discretion of Residence Life. Please see the *GA Housing Application and Agreement Terms and Conditions of Residence* for more details.