







<http://www.southalabama.edu/graduateprograms/PolicyProceduresGradAssist.pdf>

be housed in the Graduate School. In addition, Graduate Teaching Assistants will be evaluated using the Part-time Faculty Teaching Evaluation Form. The form can be found on the Academic Affairs website.

- VII REAPPOINTMENT OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS Reappointment will be considered for those assistants who are making satisfactory progress toward completion of their degree program, have been performing well in their assistantships based on formal evaluations, and the length of time they have held their assistantships.

VIII ASSISTANTSHIP STIPEND AND TUITION EXEMPTION

Graduate assistants are considered residents of the state for tuition purposes. Students appointed as 0.25 FTE pay 50% of the cost of tuition at in-state rate. International students who hold a graduate assistantship appointment are not charged the International Student Fee. Students who hold a graduate assistantship during the spring term are still considered residents for the subsequent summer term even if the student does not hold an assistantship for the summer term. This means that if such a student chooses to take and pay for courses during the summer term, the student will pay in-state tuition rates.

A biweekly timesheet must be signed by the student's graduate faculty supervisor and departmental chair and returned to the payroll department each pay period. The biweekly timesheet documents hours worked by a Graduate Assistant per the Affordable Care Act. The hours reported on any given timesheet do NOT affect the student's pay. A Graduate Assistant who submits a zero timesheet will still be paid per their appointment if signed by the supervisor. When a Graduate Assistant supervisor approves a 0-hour timesheet, the supervisor is attesting the student worked zero hours but should be paid. If a timesheet is not submitted, a check will not be available to the student for that pay period. Checks are direct deposited.

For Graduate Assistants funded on external grants or contracts, other terms may apply and should be followed per the award. For example, some contracts stipulate a billable hours model where a student will not be paid for a 0-hour timesheet.

Income tax forms, a FICA withholding statement, and a direct deposit form must be completed and submitted to the Payroll Office. An I-9 verification form must be completed with appropriate identification documents in the Payroll Office (AD 280) before the student may begin work.

- IX PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING GRIEVANCES Graduate Assistants may use this process to seek redress of grievances arising out of terms or conditions of their appointment.

assistantship appointment.

**INFORMAL RESOLUTION** The graduate assistant should make every effort to resolve a grievance with the graduate supervisor. A graduate assistant who is unsatisfied with the outcome of the informal resolution may request mediation.

**REQUEST FOR MEDIATION** A graduate assistant shall prepare and submit a written grievance to the Department Chair. A copy of the grievance shall be sent to the appropriate Dean to whom the Chair reports as well as the person or persons against whom the grievance is filed (Respondent). If the Department Chair is party to the grievance or if there is no Department Chair or Acting Chair, the grievance shall be submitted to the appropriate Dean. If the graduate assistantship appointment is funded in part or in full from external sources, other parties may be involved as necessary (e.g., Institutional Research or Grants and Contracts).

**MEDIATION AND RESOLUTION** Upon receipt of the grievance, the Chair shall set up a conference with the Grievant and the Respondent. The chair should schedule and hold the conference as soon as practicable, ensuring there is no delay that might unfairly penalize the graduate assistant. The Respondent may submit a written response to the Chair prior to this meeting. The Chair acts as a mediator to seek a mutually satisfactory resolution. If a mutually satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the appropriate Dean will review the grievance and evidence presented and decide on a resolution. A Grievant or Respondent who is unsatisfied with the Dean's resolution may appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School.

**APPEAL** The Dean of the Graduate School will review the mediated resolution to ensure that proper procedure has been followed throughout the process, render a decision, and notify the Grievant and Respondent. The Dean of the Graduate School may decide to uphold the mediated resolution, revise the mediated resolution, decide on a new resolution, or dismiss the grievance. The decision of the Dean of the Graduate School is considered final and is not subject to further appeal. The Dean of the Graduate School is party to the grievance; the appeal will be reviewed by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### X TERMINATION OF GRADUATE ASSISTANT APPOINTMENT

Any appointment may be curtailed, diminished, or terminated at any time for lack of funds; failure of the student to maintain satisfactory student status or to make appropriate progress toward the degree; no further need for the functions to be performed; incompetence or misconduct of the graduate assistant or fellow; or failure to complete the degree requirements.

A termination of appointment action is initiated by the Chair of the department to which the graduate assistant is assigned. The Chair meets with the graduate assistant

and explains the causes of termination.

The Department Chair forwards a recommendation for termination of appointment to Director of Graduate Studies of the appropriate college. The letter explains the basis of the recommendation for termination. The Director of Graduate Studies reviews the recommendation for termination of appointment and may investigate the circumstances of the termination. After the review, the Director of Graduate Studies sends a recommendation regarding the termination to the Dean of the Graduate School. Only the Graduate Dean may terminate an appointment.

Grievances in regard to termination shall follow the Procedure for Resolving Complaints (See IX)

A termination for budgetary considerations is not subject to the Procedure for Resolving Complaints.

- XI ~~RESPONSIBILITIES~~ ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND REIMBURSEMENT Expenses incident to assigned duties. Graduate assistants will be reimbursed by the institution of necessary expenses and/or travel associated with assigned duties.

The graduate assistant shall secure approval from the Department Chair prior incurring expenses.

The department or college will provide the necessary physical space and services for execution of the graduate assistant's duties.

- XII ~~ASSISTANTS-~~ UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS- employment of graduate teaching assistantships will be carefully planned and carried out in a manner providing the greatest possible benefits to the university's students, the graduate assistants, the departments involved, and the reputation of the university.

All graduate students holding the title of Graduate Teaching Assistant must be fully qualified to the standard of having earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their discipline. This permits students in this category to be assigned primary responsibility for teaching a suitable undergraduate course for credit and assigning final grades. SACS requires assistants with primary teaching responsibilities to have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline. Assistants with primary teaching responsibility will serve under the supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular service training, and be evaluated regularly in accordance with department policy.

Graduate Teaching Assistants are required to complete a *background check* for any criminal history, to verify social security validity, and to check the National Sex Offender Registry Information obtained is kept strictly confidential.

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