

Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy

Document Number:	AU Research Policy 13 (ARP-13)
Document Title:	Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy
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Approved By:	Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA)
Date Approved:	30 September 2020
Date Effective From:	1 October 2020

Note: A list of abbreviations is defined in By-Laws for DGSR

1. Aim and Objectives

The aim of graduate assistanceship is to promote graduate programs at AU, increase enrollment in AU graduate programs and produce graduate students who become more learned, creative, and professional individual through formal instruction, interaction with faculty, research, and relevant academic experience. The objective of this initiative is to increase AU research outputs and to provide support to graduate faculty in their research.

2. Policy Statements

1. A Graduate Assistant (GA) is an individual who serves AU in a support role (teaching or research) while completing his/her graduate studies at AU.
2. The scope of this document is for AU master's programs only.
3. The AU may offer graduate students the following two types of assistantships:
 - a. Sponsored Graduate Research Assistant (SGRA)
 - b. Sponsored Graduate Teaching Assistant (SGTA)
4. For each graduate program offered by AU, the University provides financial support to GA's in terms of full or partial tuition fee waiver and a monthly stipend in some categories. A GA must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student in the University for the duration of their assignments.
5. The graduate assistantships will be cancelled if the awardee does not meet his/her enrollment and performance related obligations.
6. The graduate assistanceship will be provided during Fall and Spring semester only.
7. The maximum duration of graduate assistanceship is 2 years.
8. Assistantships are awarded for designated periods of time by the graduate programs with funds allocated and monitored by the DGSR. Such assistanceship might be terminated at any time.
9. Graduate assistantship is contingent upon student status, satisfactory degree progress (i.e. CGPA), and end of semester performance evaluation.
 - a. For Cat-1 GA (refer below for definition), the supervisor or HoD must certify the performance as Good or higher, while for other SGRA/SGTA categories, the performance must be graded

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as at least satisfactory at the end of each regular semester (i.e. Fall and Spring semesters only).

10. A GA must devote effort to formal study and assigned duties of teaching or research that are designed to enhance their university education. The stipend and/or Credit Hour (CR) fee reduction received by the GA is in recognition of these services and continuity of assistanceship is subject to satisfactory performance.
11. The Cat-1 GA shall work in the University as a full-time graduate student without any other part-time or full-time job, within or outside University, and must not be recipient of any other AU scholarship or discount (either partial or full discount). Further, GA shall not be hire as Hourly Paid Research Assistants (HPRA) in AU internally funded research grants.
12. The appointing academic program coordinator or college dean determines service requirements of students who hold these assistantships. In all cases, the award obligate awardees to no more than 20 hours per week of services that make a substantive contribution to the student's academic and professional development. If the GA determines that he/she cannot meet the requirements of the award, it is imperative that he/she notifies the program to initiate renegotiation or reassignment of the award with correspondingly less support.
13. It is a responsibility of the Graduate Program Coordinator and/or supervisor to make sure that the GA's are fully aware of all related policies and procedures and abide them.
14. For graduate programs offered in the College of Dentistry, the following GA categories and requirements do not hold. The college of Dentistry graduate programs may offer SGTA positions only (without any tuition fee waiver support), and the allocated funds for such positions will be communicated by the dean of GSR to the college once the budget is approved.

GA Categories and Requirements

15. The following table summarises the SGRA categories and related requirements:

Thesis is Required as part of Degree Completion Requirement	SG-RA Category	Credit Hours Supported by AU	SG-RA Working Hours / week as a part-time RA	Monthly Stipend (AED)	Minimum CGPA Requirements	Registered Credit Hours
Yes	Cat-1 SGRA	9	20	4,000	3.5	9
Yes	Cat-2 SGRA	6	15	3,000	3.0	9
Yes	Cat-3 SGRA	4.5	10	2,000	3.0	9
No	Cat-4 SGRA	3	5	0	3.0	12

16. The following table summarises the categories of SGTA's and related requirements:

SG-TA Category	Credit Hours Supported by AU	SG-TA Min. Working Hours / week	Monthly Stipend (AED)	Minimum CGPA Requirements	Registered Credit Hours
Cat-1 SGTA	9	20	4,000	3.5	9
Cat-2 SGTA	6	15	3,000	3.0	9

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Cat-3 SGTA	4.5	10	2,000	3.0	9
Cat-4 SGTA	3	5	0	3.0	12

3. Procedures

Selection Procedures

1. The dean of GSR allocates a suitable budget for graduate assistanceship for all graduate programs and informs graduate program coordinators and college deans the allocated funds (i.e. total number of CR and funds for monthly stipend) as soon as budget is approved.
2. The Graduate Program Coordinators, College Deans or HODs advertise such positions on all relevant media (e.g. LinkedIn, Social Media etc.) and also use their personal contacts to search outstanding graduates with strong potential for graduate studies and research to apply for these positions. They can also use their networking to invite outstanding graduates from UAE or abroad.
3. All students enroll in the program shall have the opportunity to apply and compete for graduate assistanceship, if they wish.
4. At the start of each academic year, the college Dean shall form an ad-hoc selection committee to review student applications, interview the short-listed candidates, assess candidates based on a pre-defined criterion and recommend candidates to the dean of GSR for approval. The college dean send all details, such as recommendation form (with scores against set criteria), CV's of short listed candidates, copy of email/advertisement sent to all students etc. to the DGSR with recommendations.
5. The dean of GSR send approval to the college Dean and notify other relevant offices such as Audit, Finance etc. College Dean, then, inform applicants formally and hire them on the positions.
6. All selected GA's will be required to sign an undertaking form and submit to the graduate program coordinator, who will send a copy to DGSR for records.
7. The graduate program coordinator and college dean will be responsible for assigning a supervisor for each SGRA, while SGTA will work under the HoD or head of unit.
8. The supervisor(s) will be informed about expected outcomes and they shall be responsible to ensure that the research task is well-defined and properly supervised to achieve these outcomes.

Progress Monitoring

1. Graduate Assistants should have regular meetings with the appointed supervisors on a regular basis and keep a record of such meetings.
2. The supervisor (or HoD) of GA submits a progress report to the college member of Council of Graduate Studies, with evaluation score, at the end of Fall and Spring semesters.
3. The college member of Council of Graduate Studies shall forward this report to the DGSR with his/her comments and endorsement from the College Dean.