

Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy

Document Number:	AU Research Policy 13 (ARP-13)
Document Title:	Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy
Prepared By:	Dean of Research and Graduate Studies
Approved By:	Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA)
Date Approved:	30 September 2020 (updated December 2022)

Note: A list of abbreviations is defined in By-Laws for Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies

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 AU may offer selected graduate students
 - a. Sponsored Graduate Research Assistant (SGRA)
 - b. Sponsored Graduate Teaching Assistant (SGTA)
3. For graduate programs 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 be enrolled as a full-time graduate student i.e. taking credits as per study plan in the University for the duration of their assignments.
4. The graduate assistantships can be terminated by the University.
5. The graduate assistanceship will be provided during Fall and Spring semester only.
6. The maximum duration of graduate assistanceship is the approved minimum official duration of the program.
7. Graduate assistantship is contingent upon student status, satisfactory degree progress (i.e. CGPA), and performance evaluation. For full GA's (working 20 hours/week), the supervisor must certify the performance as Good or higher, while for other categories, the performance must be graded as at least satisfactory at the end of each regular semester (i.e. Fall and Spring semesters only), endorsed by college Dean.
8. 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 (as applicable) and/or Credit Hour (CR) fee reduction received by the GA is in recognition of these services and continuity of assistanceship is subject to their satisfactory performance.

Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy

9. The full GA's (working 20 hours/week) 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, full GA's shall not be hired as Hourly Paid Research Assistants (HPRA) in AU internally funded research grants.
10. The appointing academic program coordinator and 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 coordinator to initiate renegotiation or reassignment of the award with correspondingly less support.
11. It is a responsibility of the Graduate Program Coordinator and/or supervisor to make sure that the graduate assistants are fully aware of all related policies and procedures and abide them.
12. For all GA categories, students are expected to register required number of credit hours, as per their study plan and other university requirements.
13. The following table summarises the SGRA categories and related requirements (applicable for all programs except graduate programs offered by College of Dentistry and College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences):

SGRA Category	Maximum Tuition Fee Supported by AU (per semester)	SGRA Working Hours / week	Monthly Stipend (AED)	Minimum CGPA Requirements
Cat-1 SGRA (Full SGRA)	100% tuition fee up to 9 credit hours	20	4,000	3.5
Cat-2 SGRA (Half SGRA)	50% tuition fee up to 4.5 credit hours	10	2,000	3.0
Cat-3 SGRA (3-CR SGRA)	3 credit hours	5	0	3.0

The Cat-1 SGRA and Cat-2 SGRA are valid for all master's programs where thesis is a requirement as part of degree completion while Cat-3 SGRA is applicable to all graduate programs.

14. The following points summarises the SGRA arrangements in the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (SGRA-Pharmacy):
 - Graduate assistantship is provided to selected candidates for the partial tuition fee waiver (up to two third tuition waiver throughout the whole programme) as long as the GA maintains a good standing status and fulfils his/her graduate assistant duties as assigned by the College Dean. No further compensations or stipend is to be provided to the GA.
 - The GA provide their services as SGRA-Pharmacy for upto 14 working hours per week during the first three semesters of their study in the program. For tuition fee waiver of less than two third of the full tuition fee, the working hours are considered on a pro-rata basis.
 - The SGRA-Pharmacy must maintain a minimum CGPA of 3.0 throughout the program duration.
 - The SGRA-Pharmacy must follow the study plan devised by the college and complete their program over a maximum of 5 semesters.

Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy

15. The following points summarises the SGTA arrangements in the college of Dentistry:
- Graduate assistantship is provided to selected candidates in the form of tuition fees waiver of up to 76,000 AED per academic year throughout the duration of programme as long as the GA maintains a good standing status and fulfils his/her graduate assistanceship (i.e. SGTA-Dentistry) duties as assigned by the College Dean. No further compensations are to be provided to the graduate assistants.
 - The SGTA-Dentistry must maintain a minimum CGPA of 3.0 throughout the program duration.
 - The GA provide their services as SGTA-Dentistry for up to 20 working hours per week throughout the program. For tuition fee waiver of less than 76,000 AED per academic year, the working hours are considered on a pr-rata basis.
For any number of working hours less than 20 hours per week, the tuition fee waiver is counted on pro-rata basis. No further compensations are to be provided to the SGTA-Dentistry.
16. The following points summarises the SGTA arrangements in the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (SGTA-Pharmacy):
- Graduate assistantship is provided to selected candidates in the form of full tuition fee waiver throughout the duration of programme as long as the GA maintains a good standing status and fulfils his/her graduate assistanceship (i.e. SGTA-Pharmacy) duties as assigned by the College Dean. No further compensations are to be provided to the graduate assistants.
 - The GA provide their services as SGTA-Pharmacy for 20 working hours per week during the first three semesters of their study in the program.
 - The SGTA-Pharmacy must maintain a minimum CGPA of 3.0 throughout the program duration.
 - The SGTA-Pharmacy must follow the study plan devised by the college and complete their program over a maximum of 5 semesters.

3. Relevant Procedures

Selection Procedures

1. The dean of Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies allocates a suitable budget for relevant graduate assistanceship (excluding some categories where budget is allocated by the respective colleges) for graduate programs and informs graduate program coordinators and college deans the allocated funds (i.e. total number of credit hours supported and funds for monthly stipend) as soon as budget is approved.
2. The Graduate Program Coordinators, and College Deans advertise such positions 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, as 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 Deanship of Research and Graduate

Graduate Assistant (GA) Policy

Studies 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 Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies with recommendations.

5. The dean of Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies 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 service contracts before commencing their work.
7. The graduate program coordinator and college dean will be responsible for assigning a supervisor for each SGRA, while SGTA will work under the program coordinator and college Dean.
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. Graduate Assistants submit progress report to the supervisor, who submits report with his/her evaluation to the college member of Council of Graduate Studies, at the end of each Fall and Spring semesters.
3. The college member of Council of Graduate Studies forwards progress report to the Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies with his/her comments and endorsement from the College Dean.