

2021-2022 Graduate Assistantship Agreement (GAA)

This agreement, provided to departments by the Graduate School, may not be amended or changed without written approval of the Graduate School.

Please read this document carefully. Your signature indicates you, the student, have read, accepted and will abide by the terms and conditions listed in this agreement.

This agreement is made between and

Student's Name and Bear #	Unit or Department
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We are pleased to confirm you have been awarded the following assistantship at the University of Northern Colorado (please check one)

- GTA-A Graduate Teaching Assistant (Teaches *only* undergraduate courses **under supervision** – may be instructor of record)
- GTA-B Graduate Teaching Assistant (Assists faculty – not instructor of record – may assist in graduate courses, but not without direct faculty supervision)
- GPI Graduate Part-time Instructor (Qualifies as instructor of record under HLC guidelines without the need for supervision – not course coordinator or supervisor for teaching assistants)
- GA-A Graduate Assistant
- GRA Graduate Research Assistant

The assistantship appointment is **Academic** **Fiscal Year** **Semester**

Start Date: _____ **End Date:** _____

This appointment is for _____ hours of work per week, for which you will be paid a gross stipend of \$ _____ (enter the amount). For the purposes of the tuition waiver, the student is classified as a _____ eligible for tuition and partial fee waiver for up to _____ credits based on enrollment in 3-10 graduate credits.

Stipend amounts **must** conform to the university stipend chart and correspond to the student's program level (master's or doctoral) and appointment term (Semester, AY or FY). Academic units have flexibility in determining tuition waiver, but the unit must be consistent in the amount of tuition waiver offered for the number of hours contracted per week. Students are financially responsible for all tuition and remaining fees not covered by their tuition and partial fee waiver.

Important Terms and Conditions

Terms of Employment and Student Classification

- Congratulations on receiving an assistantship. Please be aware that the funding outlined in your assistantship agreement offsets the cost of your graduate program at UNC but will not be sufficient to cover all related costs, such as books, some university fees, health insurance and living expenses.
- An individual must be admitted to the Graduate School and a graduate degree program at UNC **before** being contracted for an assistantship position.
- Graduate students who receive assistantships, including GPI, GTA-A, GTA-B, GA-A and GRA are classified by the university as **students** and not as UNC faculty or administrative employees.
- If there is any variance or conflicting language between an offer letter from a student's school/department and this agreement, the agreement takes precedence.
- **Graduate part-time instructors may not be hired to teach graduate-level courses, and graduate teaching assistants may provide instruction to other graduate students only under the direct supervision of the faculty member assigned as instructor of record.** A student holding a GPI may teach only undergraduate students as the instructor of record. A GTA-A may teach undergraduate courses under the supervision of a faculty member and may be listed as the instructor of record. Students with GTA-B appointments may support graduate faculty in graduate classes but are not to be solely responsible for class instruction or grading. Failure to comply with this policy may result in termination of the assistantship agreement.
- Graduate teaching assistants classified as GPI, GTA-A or GTA-B must attend a mandatory graduate student teaching conference each fall or forfeit a portion of their stipend. The fall 2021 GTA Conference is scheduled **August 18, 2021**. Some required asynchronous training materials will be posted in Canvas prior to the conference. All GPIs and GTAs are encouraged to pursue the certificate in college teaching, offered through CETL and the Graduate School.
- By signing this agreement, the student agrees not to accept any additional offers for the academic year covered by this agreement, such as:
 - Assistantships from any other graduate programs or administrative units without first notifying the director/chair/supervisor of the initial appointing unit of such an offer and receiving a written release from this agreement issued by the director/chair/supervisor.
 - A second assistantship appointment when the combination of appointments exceeds 20 hours per week.
 - Other positions for stipend at the university in addition to a full-time assistantship. A full-time graduate assistant may hold a student hourly position. A student holding a half-time graduate assistantship may secure other positions for stipend and/or tuition waiver at the university. In any case, the combination of assistantship and hourly on-campus work positions shall not exceed 30 hours per week.
- Graduate assistants are responsible for informing the Graduate School of changes to their contact information.
- Students on assistantship support must complete all duties assigned by the appointing unit(s) in a satisfactory manner and in compliance with the UNC Code of Conduct. Any violation of the UNC Code of Conduct/Community Standards may result in immediate dismissal from an assistantship position and withdrawal of the tuition waiver.

Expected Hours and Weeks of Contracted Work

- The maximum assistantship for which a student is eligible at the University of Northern Colorado is .50 FTE (20 hours per week), whether in a single appointment or any combination thereof. GPI, GTA-A, GTA-B, GA-A and GRA appointments of 16-20 hours a week are considered full time, and appointments of 8-15 hours are considered half time. Appointments of 3-7 hours a week provide a stipend but are not eligible for tuition and partial fee waiver. Tuition waiver is calculated on a per-credit-hour basis for graduate level courses (500s, 600s and 700s) only.

- Academic year (AY) agreement: mid-August to mid-May, or 34 weeks.
 - Students on AY appointments work 17 weeks during both fall and spring terms.
 - Supervisors and students are allowed some flexibility to negotiate weekly work hours and the number of working weeks as long as the student works all of the hours required in the contract (e.g., 18 hours x 17 weeks = 306 contract hours).
 - Students cannot work or be required by supervisors to work beyond the end date of their contract.
 - Students on GPI, GTA-A and GTA-B contracts must report no later than the week prior to the start of the term (fall and spring). Start dates are confirmed with the department/unit.
 - AY agreements require students to work during non-university holidays (Presidents', Columbus and Veteran's days).
- Fiscal year (FY) agreement: July 1 - June 30.
 - The student's schedule follows the UNC calendar, including working during spring, fall and winter breaks, unless other arrangements are agreed upon between the supervisor and student to ensure all contracted hours are met.
 - New FY agreements, beginning in July of each year, require fall enrollment to qualify for the assistantship.
- Students on semester contracts should work their contracted hours over 17 weeks.
- As with any professional appointment, the amount of work time may vary slightly from week to week, yet no student should exceed 20 hours a week per this agreement.

University Breaks, Vacation and Sick Leave

- Students on FY and AY agreements are permitted one week of vacation break, usually taken during winter break or spring break, or, for FY contracts, during the summer. Again, this should be negotiated with the supervisor. Students on GPI, GTA-A and GTA-B contracts may **not** take vacation while classes are in session. With the consent of their supervisors, students working over winter break or spring break may work on campus or from home.
- Semester contracts do not include a vacation break.
- All students holding graduate assistantships are entitled to sick leave. Students requiring sick leave should check with Human Resources Services for information on sick leave policies.
- Students with semester, AY or FY contracts do not accrue additional paid vacation days or sick leave days beyond what is stated in these terms.

Admission with Language Requirements or Academic Provisions

- A student who does not meet the minimum TOEFL score requirement or who needs to enroll in any courses through the Intensive English Program (IEP) may not hold a GPI as instructor of record or a GTA-A appointment (teaching under faculty supervision) but may assist in undergraduate courses with direct faculty supervision as a GTA-B or hold a GA-A or GRA appointment. In no case will tuition waivers cover the cost of IEP courses. Departments may require additional English proficiency assessment.
- A student admitted with academic provisions may not hold an assistantship until the program notifies the Graduate School that all academic provisions are successfully completed.

Enrollment and Academic Standing Requirements

- A student must enroll in a minimum of 3 credit hours of graduate classes each term to maintain the assistantship. Classes may not be repeated solely for the purpose of holding a graduate assistantship. Students should not fill their schedules with dissertation proposal (797) or dissertation (799) credits unless they are working on their proposal or dissertation.

- A student enrolled in only dissertation credits should, typically, be hired as an adjunct and not contracted on an assistantship. Students may not hold an assistantship for more than two semesters of dissertation credit only enrollment.
- Students with assistantships must maintain good academic standing at UNC (at least a 3.0 grade point average), attend class on a regular basis throughout the semester, and maintain high standards of academic integrity. Should the cumulative GPA of a graduate assistant (inclusive of all categories) fall below the 3.0 standard, the assistantship will be reassigned the next semester to another student to allow the former graduate assistant to improve the GPA. If a graduate assistant (inclusive of all categories) is found responsible for a violation of academic integrity, the department/school or administrative unit should withdraw the student's assistantship agreement.
- Fiscal year agreements pay up to 6 credit hours in the summer term. Students must be registered on the first day of classes to receive the stipend, tuition and partial fee waiver.

Financial Terms

- Stipends, as stated in the agreement, are based on the number of hours per week that a student is contracted to work.
- Consistent with federal financial aid guidelines, graduate assistantship tuition waivers are applied only to:
 - Graduate-level courses
 - Courses included in the student's plan of study and, if needed, one 3-credit-hour course per calendar year as long as the student does not exceed the number of credits covered by the agreement
 - Credits needed to complete the degree program
- The tuition and partial fee waiver associated with your assistantship is a student financial resource. As such, an adjustment or reduction may be necessary in other financial aid (e.g., loans or scholarships) should you exceed your maximum eligibility. Your timely response to all future agreements related to this offer and any other offers of financial assistance from UNC will ensure that funds are available to you at the beginning of your appointment.
- Stipend is deemed taxable compensation. Any tuition remission hereunder shall be in the form of financial aid, provided independently of the stipend as qualified tuition reduction given for educational purposes and shall not be deemed taxable compensation pursuant to section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. You can view your tuition information at <http://www.unco.edu/acctservices/bursar/eBills/>.
- The stipend is not a scholarship award, but rather compensation for the performance of assigned duties. Failure to fulfill assigned responsibilities, withdrawal from the university, or failure to meet the above described conditions may be grounds for termination of this agreement, which shall terminate the stipend payable under this agreement. Such termination also shall result in forfeiture of further tuition remission and may result in repayment of the remaining tuition waiver. Assistantship agreements are subject to university policy regarding withdrawal or cancellation charges. If payments of stipend or tuition are accepted after the date of termination, the student is responsible for repayment.
- The tuition waiver covers:
 - Up to the maximum number of credits noted in the contract
 - Course credits in the student's plan of study and one additional 3-credit course per academic year
- The tuition waiver will **not** pay for:
 - More credits than needed to complete the degree program, including extra 797 or 799 credits
 - Undergraduate credits, even if 100-400-level courses are recommended by the student's program

- Partial fee waiver covers Student Services and LEAF fees. Graduate assistants are responsible for:
 - Other fees, such as technology and student capital fees
 - Specific course fees
 - Cost of health insurance
- Tuition and partial fee waivers post to billing accounts two to three business days after the add/drop deadlines to accommodate changes to registration. Students who add or drop credits following add/drop will see adjustments to their accounts and may incur extra charges.
- Stipends are paid via direct deposit. A student may be required to provide the university with other information necessary to allow prompt payment of the stipend.
- The tuition and partial fee waiver provided through this agreement does not extend to graduate student study abroad. Should a graduate student choose a study abroad course, the tuition waiver will cover only the customary tuition for courses in the discipline and will not cover other fees or costs associated with study abroad courses (travel, lodging, insurance, etc.).
- All assistantship agreements are contingent on funding by the State of Colorado and/or the granting agency under which the assistantship is to be funded and approval by the University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees.
- A student may hold a graduate assistantship **or** utilize the employee/dependent tuition grant, **but not both**.

Nonresident Students and Tuition Waivers

- The Graduate School allocates assistantship budgets to the colleges. College leadership, in consultation with graduate programs, decides whether to budget positions with international or nonresident tuition waivers.
 - Programs are encouraged to provide nonresident tuition waivers to domestic nonresident students for their first year of assistantship contract only. Domestic students who wish to become residents of Colorado should check the university Registrar's web page, unco.edu/Registrar, for information on applying for residency status.
 - Programs are permitted to budget positions with resident tuition waiver only, even for nonresident/international students. In such cases, the student will be responsible for paying the difference between the resident and nonresident tuition rate. Students should check their contract very carefully and understand if they are receiving a resident or nonresident tuition waiver.
- Students who qualify for WICHE Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) classification receive tuition charge and tuition waiver at the resident rate. Students from WICHE states are not automatically classified as WICHE students. They must qualify by demonstrating that they are residents of a WICHE state. Otherwise, they will be charged tuition at the nonresident rate and will be responsible for any tuition charges not covered by the tuition waiver. For more information on WICHE/WRGP, please see unco.edu/graduate-school/funding/western-regional-graduate-program.aspx.

Limits on Assistantship Funding Supported by the Graduate School

- The Graduate School aims to provide support to students in the early stages of their programs and to relieve students at proposal and dissertation stage of assistantship workload so they can make progress toward completion of their degree. The availability of assistantship funding is always dependent on the university budget. For these reasons, the Graduate School reserves the right to place time limits on assistantship funding.
- All assistantships funded through the university are contingent upon the university budget and funding sources. No one in the university has the authority to promise multi-year assistantship funding or automatic renewal of a university funded assistantship position beyond the end date of this agreement.
- A graduate student may not be hired as an adjunct and hold an assistantship in the same term.
- Regardless of funding source, the university reserves the right to cancel this agreement for any reason with 30 days' written notification to the student.

This offer is an agreement for your services and carries with it full responsibilities as required in any agreement. Your signature indicates that you have read all of the terms and conditions of this agreement and that you will review the Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants. We value your relationship with UNC. Your assistantship takes precedence over any other work obligation(s) you may undertake during the course of your appointment. Your assignment for the duration of this assistantship is:

Welcome to UNC and your program. We look forward to working with you. By typing/signing your name below, you attest that you have **read and accepted** the conditions of this offer (**pages 2-5 of this document**). If we do not hear from you by _____ (date), this offer may be withdrawn.

_____	_____
Student Name	Date
_____	_____
Director	Date

This section to be completed by the student:

Will student enroll in either thesis (699) or dissertation (799) credits during the present agreement term? Yes No

Year in UNC graduate program? _____ Years as a GA or TA at UNC? _____ (1, 2, 3, etc.)

Is student enrolled in an Extended Campus or WRGP program? Y N Program: _____

Departments may establish a higher standard. Such standards should be communicated to the Graduate School and interested applicants.

Please complete if tuition is being paid by Department/Program

Type of Appointment				
Fund	Org	Account	Program	FTE:

Account Codes:

GTA-A 62860 GTA-B 62860 GA-A 62860 GPI 62860 GRA 62860

GRANTS ONLY (3 funds only)

OSP Signature	Date	Aid Code		Tuition