

Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Graduate Assistantship Policy Manual

2019-2020

Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management (SAEM)

Graduate Assistantship Policy Manual 2019-2020

The Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management is committed to funding approximately 40 graduate assistantships each year for students primarily enrolled in the College Student Affairs graduate program (Master of Education in Professional Counseling with a concentration in College Student Affairs). Approximately half of the assistantships are for first-year students, and approximately half are for second-year students. The purposes of the Graduate Assistantships are:

- To support the work of the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management.
- To provide financial support for graduate students pursuing master's degrees in College Student Affairs.
- To provide a developmental experience for Graduate Assistants (GAs) in order to help prepare them to be successful higher education professionals - helping them learn about higher education as a career, develop professional skills, learn to balance personal and professional life, and learn about themselves.
- To provide opportunities for GAs to put academic principles and theories from their studies into practice in a professional environment.

Policies

Abbreviations in this document:

SAEM – Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

VPSAEM – Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

GA – Graduate Assistant

CSA – College Student Affairs graduate program

1. Work Schedules

Because of the nature of the student affairs profession, work hours may vary slightly depending on the time of year and demands of the particular office. **Supervisors will work with GAs to help them balance work, school, and life.**

- All GAs will work approximately 20 hours per week.
- The following anticipated work schedule for GAs is for the 2019-2020 academic year. If it is necessary for some GAs to work on holidays, before the first day of work for a term, or after the last day of work for a term, they will receive additional compensation, OR will take off other days to

make up for those days, at the discretion of the supervisor. Department heads/supervisors will communicate this with their GAs.

- GAs are not eligible for vacation time. If there is a need for flexible time away, this needs to be worked out with the supervisor, prior to the time away, and documented in writing.
- GAs should work with their supervisor to clearly define what work hours are work expectations. Attending events and programs that are not defined as part of expected work is at the choice of the GA.
- In the first weeks of work GAs and their supervisors should document their planned work schedule for the upcoming semester.

Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management (SAEM) Anticipated Graduate Assistant Work Calendar 2018-2019

Term	First Day of Work	Classes Begin	Breaks	Classes End	Graduation	Last Day of Work
Fall 2019	Aug. 5* Aug. 7	Aug. 14	Sept. 2 Oct. 3-4 Nov. 25-29	Dec. 6	Dec. 14	Dec. 13
Spring 2020	Jan. 2	Jan. 6	Jan. 20 Mar. 16-20	Apr 25	May 7	April 30**

**New Graduate Assistant Orientation*

*** Summer 2020 (April 30th – May 31st; 80-hour tuition waiver to be completed)*

If it is necessary for some GAs to work on holidays, before the first day of work for a term, or after the last day of work for a term, they will receive additional compensation, or will take off other days to make up for those days, at the discretion of the supervisor. Department heads/supervisors will communicate this with their GAs.

Note – GA stipends are based on 80 work hours per month (20 hours for four weeks). For months in which the GAs do not work four weeks, for example in August, December, and May, GAs are to work with their supervisor to determine alternate times to make up those hours.

2. Compensation

GAs will receive a monthly stipend on the last day of the month of \$800 per month (before taxes), for a 9 month period (\$7,200 per academic year), plus a waiver of tuition (2019-2020 value: \$ approx. \$2000/semester for in-state students and approx. \$8000/semester for out-of-state students)

- Because of the nature of the position, some GAs in Housing and Residence Life are required to live on campus and are provided an apartment (valued at \$500/month)

3. Summer Stipends

The SAEM Division will provide the opportunity for interested GAs to work during the summer with an \$800 (before taxes), stipend for each month.

- As long as a GA works during at least one summer session and takes at least 6 hours, his/her tuition is waived for any summer session.
- Summer pay for all GAs except those in Housing & Residence Life is from the VPSAEM's budget.

4. Mandatory Fees

Graduate students must pay all UWG mandatory fees, including a \$25 Graduate Tuition Fee, for any session they take classes. (Approximately \$1,000 per semester)

5. Health Insurance

The University System of Georgia (USG) requires all graduate students receiving a tuition reduction as part of their graduate assistantship award to have health insurance, which meets certain minimum requirements. The USG has contracted with an outside vendor to provide this insurance, which will automatically be charged to the GAs UWG account. If a GA has not purchased the USG required insurance, or received a waiver from the vendor by the deadline, his/her classes will be dropped and s/he will not be eligible for a GA position.

6. Travel Funds

- All travel must be approved by the GAs supervisor.
- SAEM provides \$300 per graduate student per Fiscal Year (July – June) to use for travel to professional conferences. Funds cannot roll over to the following year. Michelle Hawkins, Director for Student Affairs Budget, Planning and Finance, will work with GAs on the paperwork.
- Additionally, your SAEM department will provide up to \$300 in travel funds in order to support their own missions.
- The VPSAEM office may have funds available each year for which GAs may apply if they are presenting a program or participating in a case study competition. Contact Michelle Hawkins, Director for Budget, Planning and Finance (mhawkins@westga.edu), to apply for funds, in addition to the aforementioned \$600.00
- The VPSAEM Office will also periodically provide transportation for selected state and regional generalist conferences which are within driving distance (such as SACSA/NASPA Region III, GCPA, Graduate Student Faculty Forum, and Georgia's New Professionals Institute).
- Travel funds can be used for conference registration, meals, lodging, and transportation, as long as GAs follow appropriate UWG policies as outlined at <http://www.westga.edu/travel/>
- Approval/funding by the SAEM division does not constitute an excused class absence. Each professor sets his or her own class attendance policies, and it is the responsibility of the GA to follow those policies and discuss concerns with the faculty member.
- Time away and missed work and work hours to attend conferences, is to be arranged in advance with the GA supervisor, consistent with the expectations for the department.

7. Evaluations

Each term, supervisors will conduct performance evaluations with GAs to help them identify strengths, areas for growth, and future plans. This should include a preliminary discussion of the next year's assistantship with first-year GAs. Also, graduate assistants will complete an evaluation regarding their overall assistantship experience.

8. Term of Appointment

All SAEM Graduate Assistantships are renewable one-year appointments, assuming satisfactory job performance by the GA.

- GAs must be in good academic standing with their academic program to hold an assistantship in the division.
- If a GA is not performing the job satisfactorily, the supervisor will discuss that with the GA and may require corrective action, or disciplinary action ranging from warning to termination.
- Each December/January, first-year GAs and their supervisors will discuss their plans for the following year. If both the supervisor and the GA are satisfied with the appointment, the GA will continue in the appointment for a second year. If either the GA or the supervisor wishes to make a change, the SAEM VP office will facilitate a process for GAs to apply for interviews in other departments within the Division for different positions the following year. The process for a second-year student to make a change in assistantship must be completed prior to the date that available assistantships are published for newly recruited students.

9. E-mail addresses

GAs will get a UWG staff e-mail address and are expected to check it regularly and use it for all professional correspondence. GAs will be on the UWG "all-staff" listserv and on the SAEM Divisional staff listserv. Departments are responsible for requesting GA email addresses and verifying continued employment each semester so that credentials do not expire.

Because GAs are also enrolled as students, they will receive a student e-mail address (jdoe1@my.westga.edu) which they should check regularly to be sure they are aware of any academic, billing, and other student-related information from the University.

10. Parking

As a general rule, GAs receive Student Parking privileges (as a part of the mandatory Transportation Fee they pay), and will park in the appropriate zone. If there is a special situation where a GA needs a different parking classification in order to perform his/her job, the GA supervisor can work with Parking Services to see if that is possible.

11. Employment and Enrollment in CSA Graduate and Professional Program

In order to be a UWG Graduate Assistant, a student must be enrolled in a graduate program. In order to be enrolled in the CSA graduate program, a student must have either an approved graduate assistantship or be employed in higher education.

- If a student is having academic difficulties which lead the CSA faculty to believe that they may be removed from the CSA program, the faculty member will contact the VPSAEM to discuss the concerns. The GAs supervisor may be informed of the situation.

- If a student is exhibiting performance problems in their assistantship which leads their supervisor to believe that they may be terminated from the position, the supervisor will contact the VPSAEM to discuss the concerns. The CSA faculty may be informed of the situation.
- Performance Management—If a student is not performing adequately in the Assistantship, the supervisor will work with the GA to remediate performance. Such actions would include verbal and/or written warning and the development of a performance management plan. In extreme cases where the GA is unable to meet expectations, or a serious ethics concern arises the GA may be terminated.
- The CSA faculty and GA supervisor may work with the GA to help address undesirable behavior(s) so that the GA can be successful in both the academic program and the workplace. However, the final decision about academics lies with the academic department, and the final decision about employment lies with the employing department.

12. GAs Enrolled in Other Graduate Programs

An SAEM GA may be enrolled in any graduate programs at UWG, and is not required to be matriculated in the CSA program. All relevant policies in this document apply to those GAs as well. Supervisors will discuss any exceptions to policy with the GA.

13. Training/Orientation

- All new GAs are **required** to attend an Orientation to the University and Division of SAEM on the Monday prior to the official start date of work each August.
- All Division of SAEM employees, including GAs, are **required** to attend monthly staff development sessions held during the academic year.
- CSA GAs are **required** to attend monthly professional development sessions for Graduate Assistants.
- GAs may be required to attend other training sessions during the course of their employment.

14. PAR's

In order to be paid and receive a tuition waiver, a Personnel Action Request (PAR) must be completed by the University each term. The VPSAEM office will work with supervisors to ensure that all PAR's are completed in accordance with UWG deadlines. Typical deadlines are early July for Fall, early November for Spring, and early April for Summer. PARs are handled as quickly and efficiently as possible. We thank you for your patience!

15. Professional Behavior

GAs are expected to follow all University policies, including the Student Code of Conduct, and to meet any professional standards outlined by their supervisor (in terms of dress, language, communication, confidentiality, etc.). Non-employment concerns may be referred to and addressed by the Office of Community Standards.

Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Graduate Assistant Operational Calendar 2018-2019

Red-UWG dates *Blue – Selected professional association dates*

2019

August 5: Orientation for New GAs in SAEM

August 7: First Day of work for all GAs*

August 14: First Day of classes

September 2: Labor Day (University Closed)

September 20: New Professionals Workshop, Georgia College & State University

September 21: First UWG Football Home Game vs. Albany State

October 1 - 31: National Careers in Student Affairs Month

October 3-4: Fall Break

October 20 - 23: NACADA Annual Conference (Louisville, Kentucky)

October 20 - 23: NODA Annual Conference (Houston, TX)

November 2-4: SACSA/with NASPA Region III Conference (Raleigh, NC)

November TBA: Supervisors complete all PAR's for Spring (Michelle)

November/December: Supervisors conduct evaluations with GAs & discuss future plans.

November 25-29: Thanksgiving Holiday / No classes*

November 28 - 29: University closed*

December 6: Last Day of Classes

December 7-13: Exams

December 7: Department heads submit list of Fall 2019 anticipated vacant GA positions to VPSAEM office (either because GAs are graduating or because they wish to move to another department)

December 8 - 15: VPSAEM office works with department heads to determine if assistantships will be added, eliminated, or moved for Fall 2020, then finalized list of available positions are emailed to current GAs.

December 14: Graduation

December 13: Last Day of work for GAs*

2019

January 2: First day of work for GAs*

January 2 - 12: GAs wishing to change assistantships for Fall 2019 interview with departments for positions.

January 4: First Day of classes for Spring Semester

January 20: MLK Day (University Closed) *

February 1: Application Deadline for Fall 2019 CSA Program

February 27- March 1: Oshkosh Placement Exchange (OPE) (Oshkosh, WI)

TBA: CSA Interview Days for Fall 2019

March 2-5: ACPA Convention (Nashville, TN)

March 6-9: The Placement Exchange (Los Angeles, CA)

March 28 - April 1: NASPA Conference (Austin, TX)

March: Supervisors will discuss summer plans with GAs and make decisions about who will work in the summer. *(Department heads will work together to assure that every GA who wishes to have a summer assistantship has one. GAs may work 1, 2, or 3 months during the summer (May, June, July), with a stipend for each month. If a GA works less than 80 hours during a month, the stipend will be pro-rated appropriately. Summer pay for all GAs except those in Housing & Residence Life and Health Services is from the VPSAEM's budget.)*

March 16 - 20: Spring Break (no classes) *

March 15-19: ACUI Conference (Atlanta, GA)

March/April - Select Fall 2019 GAs

- Faculty notify GAs of admission to program
- VPSAEM designee notifies GAs of assistantship offer and start dates.
- VPSAEM designee sends a list of all GAs who accept positions to Jo Etta, including full name, social security number, and supervisor name.

April TBA: Complete all PAR's for Summer (Michelle)

April 18-21: NIRSA (Phoenix, AZ)

April 27: Last day of Classes

April 30: Last day of work for GAs*

May 5: Last day Final Exams

May 6: CSA Hooding Ceremony

May 7: Graduation

TBA: First day of work for summer GAs*

GAs may work 1, 2, or 3 months during the summer (May, June, July), with a stipend for each month. If a GA works less than 80 hours during a month, the stipend will be pro-rated appropriately.

If it is necessary for some GAs to work on holidays, before the first day of work for a term, or after the last day of work for a term, they will receive additional compensation as Student Assistants, **OR will take off other days to make up for those days, at the discretion of the supervisor. Department heads/supervisors will communicate this with their GAs.*

2019 - 2020 GA Professional Development Schedule
Education Center Classroom (5:00 PM- 6:00 PM) in the **Fall**
Education Center Classroom (TBD) in the **Spring**

Wednesday September 4, 2019

Wednesday October 9, 2019

Wednesday November 13, 2019