MCMA Graduate Assistant Duties and Responsibilities

How Assistantships are Awarded
Based on funding resources a limited number of graduate assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis to students within MCMA. Preference is given to top applicants and those with appropriate skill sets and who appear likely to render a high quality of service to the University through their teaching, research, or service activities.

GA United/Union Representation
Terms and conditions of employment for all SIUC Graduate Assistants are established under the current agreement between the SIU Board of Trustees and SIUC Graduate Assistants United IEA-NEA. See the current Agreement at the Graduate School or GA United Website for specific policies. It is each GA’s responsibility to be aware of all related provisions. www.gaunited.org

Important Points To Remember

- A Graduate Assistantship is a 50% time or 25% time academic appointment, which is available through a variety of offices and departments across campus including academic departments, research centers, administrative offices, and service units. Each provides a stipend and a tuition waiver for the period of appointment. GAs are still responsible for their student fees each semester.

- During fall or spring semester, an assistant must be enrolled as a student for at least eight (8) graduate level credit hours (three [3] graduate level credit hours if you have an assistantship for summer). Doctoral students who have achieved candidacy and master’s students in their last semester shall only be required to register for six (6) graduate level credit hours. Notify the Graduate Studies office staff if enrolling for only six hours in your last semester so a letter can be sent to the Graduate School assistantship office.

- Three categories of assistantship appointments exist in MCMA: teaching assistant, research assistant, and administrative graduate assistant.

- Specific duties will be assigned by the faculty or staff member with whom the GA works, within the guidelines of the Agreement.

- A GA appointment demands an average time commitment of 20 hours per week when the student is on a 50% appointment and 10 hours per week for a 25% appointment. Some weeks students may be required to work more than the 20 hours for half-time appointment or 10 hours for quarter-time appointment and some weeks they may work less. Assignments vary each semester and some graduate assistants may find themselves busier than other graduate assistants with their assigned responsibilities during a given semester.

- Satisfactory progress toward degree completion coupled with a dutiful discharge of responsibilities is the major considerations when the time comes for evaluating a graduate assistant's performance.
The direct supervisor will evaluate GA performance each semester, discuss the evaluation with the GA, acquire the GA’s signature and provide the GA a copy of the evaluation. Poor performance will result in notification of such by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and eventual loss of assistantship if problems are not remedied, as per the GA United contract.

Each spring semester, MCMA GAs who wish to be continued on funding for the following year must turn in an updated resume highlighting skill sets relevant to potential GA assignments along with the GA Assignment Information sheet. These will be distributed via email along with the deadline for submission. Failure to do this by the deadline will result in a loss of assistantship.

Continuing GAs must sign their next year contract before the end of the spring semester. You will be notified when these are ready in late April or early May.

The maximum period of award MCMA provides is four academic years (fall/spring; 36 months) of support for doctoral, three academic years (fall/spring; 27 months) for MFA students and two academic years (fall/spring; 18 months) of support for master’s students. Students should not expect support beyond these time periods.