

December 12, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Deans, Directors and Chairpersons

**FROM:** David Shulenburger, Provost

**SUBJECT:** Eligibility for Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) and Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Positions

The recently ratified Memorandum of Agreement for GTAs includes some changes in the eligibility requirements for GTA appointments. The requirements for holding GRA appointments also have been revised so that they parallel more closely those for GTAs. The following eligibility requirements for GTA and GRA appointments are effective with the Spring 2003 semester. These requirements are outlined in the Student Employment Handbook located on the Human Resources web page at <http://www.ku.edu/~kuhr/students/SEPHandbook.shtml> and, for GTAs, in the Memorandum of Agreement on the Provost's web site, <http://www.ku.edu/~provost/>.

**Appointment Eligibility Requirements**

Graduate Research Assistants: In order to be eligible for a GRA appointment, a graduate student must meet all of the following criteria:

- (1) Be a degree-seeking graduate student, admitted to a graduate program during the current semester (fall/spring) or summer session;
- (2) During the fall or spring semester, the GRA must be enrolled in no fewer than six credit hours required for the student's graduate degree.<sup>1</sup> During the summer session, the GRA must be enrolled in coursework related to his/her graduate program. The number of hours must be determined by the student's advisor and must reflect as accurately as possible the student's demand on faculty time and University facilities. Generally, an enrollment of three credit hours is appropriate for the summer session.<sup>2</sup> (Special conditions may apply for some doctoral candidates; see the "Enrollment Exceptions" section below.)
- (3) A student who has earned a graduate degree may not continue in a GRA appointment after the graduation date unless he or she has just completed a master's degree and is enrolled in a doctoral program in the same field or a closely related field or is a doctoral graduate who has been accepted into another graduate program.
- (4) Perform research that is in his/her field (or a closely related field) of study and is integral to the student's education (e.g., dissertation topic;
- (5) During the term of appointment, the GRA must be in academic good standing and making satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree, as determined by the Graduate School and the department in which the person is enrolled. Students who are admitted to a degree program on probationary or provisional

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<sup>1</sup>For GRAs who receive tuition assistance from the Provost's Office, enrollment should not exceed twelve credit hours.

<sup>2</sup> Summer enrollment for GRAs receiving tuition assistance from the Provost's Office should not exceed six hours.

status are not considered to be in academic good standing for the purpose of GRA appointments. A graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to remain in academic good standing. However, if a department judges that a graduate student whose GPA falls below 3.0 after the first semester at KU is nonetheless making satisfactory progress, the department may recommend to the Provost that the student be allowed to keep his/her GRA position for one additional semester.

- (6) Hold a GRA appointment approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (for all funds under Research and KCUR), the Office of Budget Management and Fiscal Services (for the professional schools' state- and endowment-funded GRA positions), or the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (for state- and endowment funded GRA positions in CLAS) and paid through the University payroll system.

Graduate Teaching Assistants: In order to be eligible for a GTA appointment, all of the following criteria must be met as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement:

- (1) During the term of appointment, the GTA must be admitted to and enrolled in a graduate degree program offered by the University of Kansas;
- (2) During the fall or spring semester, the GTA must be enrolled in no fewer than six credit hours required for the student's graduate degree. GTAs on summer session appointments may enroll but are not required to do so unless they are doctoral candidates, who are required to be continuously enrolled. (See below.) If a GTA is unable to enroll in the designated number of hours for reasons of medical condition or other hardship, the GTA, with supporting documentation and the approval of the department of employment (and department of study in cases in which the two are different), may petition the Office of the Provost that this requirement be waived. Final approval rests with the Provost. (Exceptions may apply for some doctoral candidates; see the section below.)
- (3) During the term of appointment, the GTA must be in academic good standing and making satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree, as determined by the Graduate School and the department in which the person is enrolled. Students who are admitted to a degree program on probationary or provisional status are not considered to be in academic good standing for the purpose of GTA appointments. A graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to remain in academic good standing. However, if a department judges that a graduate student whose GPA falls below 3.0 after the first semester at KU is nonetheless making satisfactory progress, the department may recommend to the Provost that the student be allowed to keep his/her GTA position for one additional semester.
- (4) The graduate student must satisfy any and all English proficiency criteria established by the Regents and/or the University prior to finalization of a GTA appointment. All prospective GTAs must be interviewed and have their spoken English competency certified by no fewer than three institutional personnel, at least one of whom should be a student. Non-native speakers of English must achieve a minimum score of 50 on the TSE (Test of Spoken English) or 240 on the SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit).
- (5) During the term of appointment, the GTA's assigned duties must consist primarily of direct involvement in classroom or laboratory instruction.

The University also requires that a GTA's teaching assignment be in his/her own field of study or one that is closely related. Out-of-field appointments require consultation with the student's home academic unit and the explicit approval of the Office of the Provost.

### **Enrollment Exceptions for GRAs and GTAs who are Doctoral Candidates**

In accordance with Graduate School requirements, after passing the comprehensive oral examination for a doctoral degree, the candidate must be continuously enrolled, including summer sessions, until all requirements for the degree are completed, and each enrollment must reflect as accurately as possible the candidate's demand on faculty time and University Facilities. Until 18 post-comprehensive hours are completed, the candidate must enroll in a minimum of six hours each semester and three hours during the summer session. Doctoral candidates may be enrolled in fewer than six post-comprehensive hours in the fall and spring semesters and in fewer than three hours during the summer session if all of the following conditions are met.<sup>3</sup>

- (1) Successful completion of the doctoral comprehensive examination;
- (2) Completion of all other Graduate School and departmental requirements for candidacy to the doctoral degree;
- (3) Completion of eighteen post-comprehensive credit hours;
- (4) Enrollment in one or more dissertation credit hours, or, for the professional doctoral degrees, in dissertation-equivalent hours as approved by the Provost Office.

### **Certification of Eligibility to Enroll in Fewer than Six Hours**

In order to certify that a GTA or GRA is a dissertation candidate who is eligible to enroll in fewer than six dissertation or equivalent credit hours (or fewer than three hours during summer session), campus departments must submit the attached "Graduate Teaching Assistant/Graduate Research Assistant Certification of Eligibility to Enroll Fewer than Six Hours" form to the Provost's Office. Additional detailed instructions regarding this process will be provided to the Graduate Divisions of schools and to departmental Personnel Related Staff.

Please contact the Office of the Provost (864-4904), [provost@ku.edu](mailto:provost@ku.edu), or the Department of Human Resources (864-4946) [hrdept@ku.edu](mailto:hrdept@ku.edu), for further information regarding these policy changes.

cc: Personnel Related Staff, Graduate Directors/Advisors, Principal Investigators

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<sup>3</sup> Different enrollment criteria may be used in determining eligibility for student financial aid and student loan deferments. GTAs and GRAs are advised to consult the Office of Student Financial Aid.