

# Graduate Assistant Handbook



**CALU**

School of Graduate Studies & Research  
California University of Pennsylvania  
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## Introduction to Graduate Assistantships

Every day, graduate students at California University of Pennsylvania make discoveries that impact their lives and the lives of others. Guided by scholarly faculty or university staff, challenged by rigorous coursework, and supported by contemporary resources, our graduate students learn how to use knowledge to build character and advance their careers. Our students are serious academics, energetic leaders, and thoughtful collaborators; they are driven to succeed.

California University of Pennsylvania is dedicated to the ideals of exemplary scholarship and high standards of achievement that characterize graduate education. We are proud to offer graduate assistantships to qualified students who share these goals. This handbook provides information that pertains to the academic and administrative policies and procedures of providing graduate assistantships.

California University of Pennsylvania provides financial support in the form of graduate assistantships to a limited number of qualified graduate students. A Graduate Assistant is a student employee supported by funds provided by the University or other sources and administered through the University.

Graduate Assistants perform specific duties and have responsibilities, such as: supporting instruction, supervising laboratories and other facilities, assisting faculty with sponsored programs and research or other scholarship, and assisting departments in academic, scholarship, and service endeavors. A graduate assistantship provides part-time employment to a qualified student in the pursuit of a graduate program, encourages scholarship and responsibility, enhances the academic experience, and assists departments and faculty in carrying out their missions.

All duties and services of Graduate Assistants are to be carried out under the supervision and direction of approved University faculty or staff.

## Types of Graduate Assistantships

The work that Graduate Assistants perform for the University may be grouped into the following categories:

- Research/Scholarship
- Teaching/Learning
- Service/Support

A Graduate Assistant, in any of the categories above, is a **graduate student in good academic standing** who, in the course of his or her academic preparation, is **employed in a part-time position** at California University of Pennsylvania where the **student's graduate academic preparation is based in part on the primary function** (i.e., research/scholarship, teaching/learning, or service/support), or where the duties being performed will **assist the student in fulfilling his or her degree requirements**.

The *Graduate Assistant Request Form* (submitted by the supervising department or office) and *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* for each Graduate Assistant outlines the specific responsibilities, duties, and functions, which may include but are not limited to assisting faculty with sponsored programs, research, or other scholarship; assisting faculty and departments in academic, professional, or service functions; supporting and assisting faculty in their teaching and instruction; supervising laboratories, studios, or other university facilities; or providing service or support functions to academic or non-academic departments and offices.

**All employment activities of a Graduate Assistant are carried out under the supervision and direction of an approved University faculty or staff member.**

## **Teaching/Learning**

The collective bargaining agreement between Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties (the faculty union) and Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (the state system) includes the following provisions within Article 7.C:

1. *Presidents may appoint graduate assistants to be assigned to regular faculty members to assist in research, instruction, and other professional duties.*
2. *At no time shall graduate assistants instruct lectures or laboratories unless the faculty member assigned to teach the course is present in the classroom or laboratory.*

## **Graduate Assistants & Financial Aid**

A graduate assistantship, when taxed, is not considered financial aid. Any non-taxed graduate assistantships are counted as a financial aid resource. Typically, graduate students are only eligible for unsubsidized loans. To be eligible, all graduate students, including graduate assistants must be enrolled for at least five credits of graduate-level coursework per semester/term. Students who are matriculated at the graduate level who are also enrolled in undergraduate courses to meet pre-requisite requirements for their graduate program are charged graduate tuition for their undergraduate courses. Graduate Assistants should be enrolled in at least two graduate-level courses each semester/term. To learn more, visit the Financial Aid Office in Dixon Hall on campus (Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm) or contact them via email: [finaid@calu.edu](mailto:finaid@calu.edu), phone: 724-938-4415, or the web: <https://www.calu.edu/costs-aid/financial-aid/>.

## **Graduate Assistant Work Hours**

Graduate Assistants may work 300, 200, or 100 hours per semester/term. Other amounts may be possible with pre-approval. The *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* specifies work hours and standard dates of employment. Each option is described below with the number of required registered credit hours and typical hours per week.

### **300-Hour Graduate Assistant**

A Graduate Assistant position may require 300 hours of work per semester/term. A 300-hour Graduate Assistant must be in good academic standing in the School of Graduate Studies & Research, be enrolled in nine (9) or more credits as a graduate student, and actively attending classes during the semester or term of employment. Typically, a 300-hour Graduate Assistant works 20 hours per week during the 15-week Fall or Spring semester or 30 hours per week during a 10-week Summer term. **Under no circumstances may a 300-hour Graduate Assistant work more than 30 hours per week.**

### **200-Hour Graduate Assistant**

A second Graduate Assistant option requires 200 hours of work per semester/term. Typically, the 200-hour Graduate Assistant works 13.3 hours per week during the 15-week Fall or Spring semester or 20 hours per week during a 10-week Summer term. A 200-hour Graduate Assistant must be in good academic standing in the School of Graduate Studies & Research, be enrolled in at least six (6) credits as a graduate student, and actively attending classes during the semester or term of employment. **Under no circumstances may a 200-hour Graduate Assistant work more than 30 hours per week.**

### **100-Hour Graduate Assistant**

The third Graduate Assistant option requires 100 hours of work per semester/term. Typically, the 100-hour Graduate Assistant works 6.6 hours per week during the 15-week Fall or Spring semester or 10 hours per week during a 10-week Summer term. A 100-hour Graduate Assistant must be in good academic standing in the School of Graduate Studies & Research, be enrolled for at least three (3) credits as a graduate student,

and actively attending classes during the semester or term of employment. **Under no circumstances may a 100-hour Graduate Assistant work more than 30 hours per week.**

Whether the Graduate Assistant position is 300 hours, 200 hours, or 100 hours depends upon several factors, including the available budget for positions, the work required for the position, the graduate student's availability for completing the work assignments and required work hours, and the number of credits for which the Graduate Assistant is registered. Also, as noted above, to be eligible for financial aid, all graduate students must be enrolled in at least five credits of graduate-level coursework each semester/term.

Qualified graduate students may hold more than one Graduate Assistant position as long as the combined work hours does not exceed 300 hours per term. A hiring form must be processed for each position.

### **Weekly Hour Limits**

In some situations with supervisor direction or pre-approval, a Graduate Assistant may work more or less than 20 hours per week (300-hour Graduate Assistant), 13.3 hours per week (200-hour Graduate Assistant), or 6.6 hours per week (100-hour Graduate Assistant). **Under no circumstances may a Graduate Assistant work more than 30 hours per week;** even when making up missed work hours. If a Graduate Assistant misses more than the hours in one normal workweek, the Graduate Assistant Supervisor must immediately notify Payroll, Student Accounts, and the Dean of Graduate Studies & Research. When a Graduate Assistant missed a certain number of work hours, completion of the total obligated work hours may be in jeopardy and an adjustment may need to be made to the hiring conditions and stipend amount.

## **Graduate Assistant Stipends**

Graduate Assistants are typically compensated with a stipend. Stipends are applied against the student's tuition charges, unless the student has sufficient financial aid to cover the student account. If there is not a balance owed by the student, payment will be made through the University's bi-weekly payroll system. The amount of the stipend is set each year by the University. Typically, this action takes place in the summer after the Board of Governors of PASSHE establishes tuition charges for the upcoming academic year.

For most positions, the stipend is the only form of compensation for a Graduate Assistant at California University. Graduate Assistants are responsible for paying graduate tuition and all fees. The value of the stipend is typically equal to the cost of in-state graduate tuition for the number of registered credits required for the position, but is less than the combined cost of tuition and fees. **Students are required to pay the difference between the stipend value and the tuition/fee charges when the stipend is presented to the Student Accounts Office for approval, unless there is adequate financial aid in place to cover the charges.**

The stipend amount is determined by the number of work hours on the Graduate Assistant's hiring form. A 300-hour Graduate Assistant qualifies for a stipend equal to nine credits of in-state graduate tuition. A 200-hour Graduate Assistant qualifies for a stipend equal to six credits of in-state graduate tuition. A 100-hour Graduate Assistant qualifies for a stipend equal to three credits of in-state graduate tuition.

**Tax Status of Stipends** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) treats stipends paid to Graduate Assistants as taxable income, and the University is obligated to withhold income taxes. **The Payroll Office will deduct appropriate Federal, State of Pennsylvania, and local income taxes.** Students should contact the IRS directly for tax information or consult a tax adviser. California University does not provide tax consultation.

## For Supervisors: Requesting a Graduate Assistant

To request a Graduate Assistant position, a department, office, or program, must submit a *Graduate Assistant Request Form* to the School of Graduate Studies & Research. This must be done for all positions (previously approved and new).

The *Graduate Assistant Request Form* is drafted by the proposed Graduate Assistant Supervisor. The information required on the *Graduate Assistant Request Form* includes:

- Learning Outcomes - At least three outcomes are required. Terms from Bloom's Taxonomy are used to clearly describe each learning outcome.
- Assessment/Evaluation - Each learning outcome is accompanied by a description of the methods used to assess and evaluate the Graduate Assistant's progress toward achieving the learning outcomes.
- Tasks - All of the tasks, assignments, activities, duties, and responsibilities that will be completed by the Graduate Assistant during the employment period.

## For Supervisors: Hours for Approved Positions

For approved GA positions, the GA Supervisor receives an email detailing the number of work hours allocated for the term. When a graduate student selected to fill an open GA position is identified, the GA Supervisor sends the student name and CWID to Lanie Bilitzki ([Bilitzki\\_L@calu.edu](mailto:Bilitzki_L@calu.edu)) who creates a hiring form. Given labor laws, after the second week of the term, unfilled 100-hour GA positions are closed to hiring and may not be filled. Also after the second week, unfilled GA positions approved as 300-hour and 200-hour are reduced to 200-hour and 100-hour, respectively. After the fourth week of the term, all GA hiring ceases and any unfilled GA positions may not be filled.

## For Students: Finding a Graduate Assistant Position

Available vacant GA positions are published on the California University of Pennsylvania email Daily Announcement system and are posted on the Graduate Assistant web page closer to the start of each term.

Any graduate student who qualifies for a Graduate Assistant position may express interest in securing a position by contacting a department, office, or program that is offering a position that aligns with the student's academic interests and educational development plans. Interested graduate students may also express interest in a Graduate Assistant position by emailing their resume to the School of Graduate Studies & Research administrative assistant Lanie Bilitzki ([Bilitzki\\_L@calu.edu](mailto:Bilitzki_L@calu.edu)). The School of Graduate Studies & Research will provide the names and resumes of interested students to departments, offices, and programs that are approved for a Graduate Assistant position.

## Hiring Process

Once the Graduate Assistant position has been approved, the School of Graduate Studies & Research notifies the supervisor, who may begin to search for a qualified applicant to fill the position. When the supervisor has identified the individual to fill the position, steps below take place.

**Important Notice:** Hiring a family member or other person that can be identified as having an Amorous Relationship with the GA Supervisor is prohibited.

### For On-Campus Students

- A. The School of Graduate Studies & Research completes sections 1 and 2 of the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form*, which contains the department, cost center, number of work hours (300, 200, or 100), student name, Cal U email, and CWID. The form is emailed to the Graduate Assistant Supervisor.
- B. The Graduate Assistant Supervisor reviews and verifies sections 1 and 2 and emails the *Hiring Form* to the graduate student who completes section 3.
- C. The graduate student prepares for the next step by following the instructions provided in the **Payroll Procedures** section below.

- D. The graduate student takes the *Hiring Form* to the Student Accounts Office (Dixon 120) where she/he signs and dates the *Agreement to Conditions of Employment* and *Payroll Deduction Authorization* sections. The graduate student will make payment at this time for any charges that are not covered by the stipend or financial aid.
- E. The graduate student takes the form to the Payroll Office (Dixon 415) for final processing.
- F. Payroll stamps the *Hiring Form* when complete and maintains the original. Payroll will send a copy of the approved form to the School of Graduate Studies & Research.
- G. The student must give a copy of the approved form to the Graduate Assistant Supervisor. **The Graduate Assistant Supervisor must have a signed form stamped by Payroll before permitting the Graduate Assistant to begin work.**

#### **For Global Online Students Not On Campus**

- A. The School of Graduate Studies & Research completes sections 1 and 2 of the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* containing the department, cost center, number of work hours (300, 200, or 100), Student Name, Cal U email, and CWID. The form is emailed to the Graduate Assistant Supervisor for review.
  - B. The Graduate Assistant Supervisor reviews and verifies sections 1 and 2 and emails the *Hiring Form* to the graduate student who completes section 3.
  - C. If applicable to the Graduate Assistant assignment, the graduate student signs the relevant confidentiality agreement and emails it to the Graduate Assistant Supervisor.
  - D. The graduate student prepares for the next step by following the instructions provided in the **Payroll Procedures** section below.
  - E. The student must Contact Student Accounts at 724-938-4431 option 1 for the balance owed after GA stipend.
  - F. Once payment is made, the graduate student signs and dates the *Agreement to Conditions of Employment* and *Payroll Deduction Authorization* section of the *Hiring Form* and mails the original to Lanie Bilitksi.
  - G. All Graduate Assistants must submit a signed I-9 form to verify employment eligibility. Graduate Assistants whose work is **not** completed on the university campus must sign an I-9 form, secure a notary stamp, and mail the original to Lanie Bilitksi for processing.
  - H. All **original** documentation must be mailed for further processing to this address:  
*Lanie Bilitksi, California University of PA, 250 University Avenue, Box #91, California, PA 15419*
  - I. Lanie Bilitksi will hand-carry completed forms in the Student Accounts and Payroll Offices and provide a copy to the graduate student and Graduate Assistant Supervisor. **The Graduate Assistant Supervisor must have a signed form stamped by Payroll before permitting the Graduate Assistant to begin work.**
- NOTE: The processing for any Graduate Assistant position cannot be completed until the graduate student has paid in full their bill from the University.**

#### **For All Students Hired as Graduate Assistants**

All forms must be completed and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies & Research before a Graduate Assistant begins work. No Graduate Assistant may work without submitting a fully executed hiring form. **The Graduate Assistant Supervisor must have a signed form stamped by Payroll before permitting the Graduate Assistant to begin work.**

## **International Students**

International students must first have approval from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services before seeking on-campus employment. I-9 documents can be obtained from the University's Payroll Services Office in Dixon Hall or online at [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#). U.S. Federal regulations for F-1 students do not permit paid off-campus work. Non-resident alien students seeking graduate assistantships may be affected by special regulations related to employment and taxes. Non-resident alien GAs may work a maximum of 20 hours per week (Spring & Fall term) or 30 hours per week (Summer term). All international students considering graduate assistantships should contact in the Office of International Programming at 724-938-1599.

## Payroll Procedures

New Graduate Assistants must complete payroll and tax information prior to the first day of employment. The *Student Payroll Forms* as well as other applicable forms are available on the Payroll web page: <https://www.calu.edu/inside/faculty-staff/administrative-offices/payroll.aspx> click the “**Student New Hire Forms**”. Students should download and complete all of the necessary forms prior to visiting the Payroll Office in Dixon Hall. **No Graduate Assistant may begin work without completing and submitting the necessary payroll forms/background clearance forms.**

Payroll is processed bi-weekly and after-the-fact. Thus, paychecks are for the two-week pay period that ended two weeks before the pay date. Paychecks cannot be advanced or released prior to payday, without exception. Should a payday occur on an observed holiday, the processing schedule will be adjusted, and payday will precede the holiday.

Paychecks and earnings statements are distributed on payday (every other Friday) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at the information desk on the first floor of the Natali Student Center. Paychecks not picked up by the end of the current two-week pay period are held until the end of the semester and then mailed to the student. Earnings statements are returned to the Payroll Office for filing. All Graduate Assistants who are in a Global Online program and unable to come to campus will be paid through direct deposit.

### Direct Deposit

All Graduate Assistants are encouraged to use direct deposit. The direct deposit form is available on the Payroll web page. Once the direct deposit has been activated, Graduate Assistants must notify the Payroll Office prior to making changes or closing the account. Failure to do so may result in a delay of payment. All university employees, including Graduate Assistants, who use direct deposit may view and download their pay statements from the Cal U online Employee Self-Service system.

## Graduate Assistant Employment Policies

A **Graduate Assistant** is a graduate student in good academic standing who, in the course of his or her academic preparation, is employed in a part-time position at the University. As a student employee, Graduate Assistants are subject to a variety of rules, regulations, and policies. In the performance of their responsibilities, they must abide by all relevant policies. Graduate Assistants shall respect the rights and opinions of students, staff, and faculty and uphold the academic standards of the University.

### Background Checks

Given Pennsylvania’s Child Protective Services Law, 23 Pa.C.S. §6344(c), the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education has determined that student workers are required to obtain the clearances specified under the law. Three types of background checks are required under Pennsylvania law and are mandatory:

1. **Criminal History Record Check** - From the Pennsylvania State Police indicating the individual has not been convicted of a reportable offense.
2. **Child Abuse Clearance** - Certification from the Department of Human Services as to whether the individual is named in the statewide database as a perpetrator in a pending child abuse investigation, a founded report, or an indicated report of child abuse.
3. **Federal Criminal History Background Check** - Includes fingerprinting and review by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of verifying the identity of the individual and obtaining a current record of any criminal arrests and convictions.

These background checks are processed in coordination with The Office of Human Resources and are paid

for by the University. All Graduate Assistants hired on or after January 1, 2015 are required to obtain these clearances with the Office of Human Resources within the Graduate Assistant's first 90 days of work. The background checks are valid for employment purposes with the University for 60 months and must be renewed after 60 months if still employed with the University. If a Graduate Assistant does not complete the background checks and clearances process in coordination with Human Resources within their first 90 days of employment, there will be a hold placed on their Payroll Account. The hold on their Payroll Account will not be released until all clearances are complete and received by Human Resources. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to work, receive payment for hours worked, or be able to make up lost hours.

**Reportable Offenses** – If any of the following reportable offenses are found, the Graduate Assistant cannot work. Provisions of Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes (relating to crimes and offenses) or an equivalent crime under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
- Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children)
- In no case shall an employer, administrator, supervisor or other person responsible for employment decisions hire or approve an applicant if the applicant's criminal history record information indicates the applicant has been convicted of a felony offense under the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No.64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, committed within the five-year period immediately preceding verification under this section.

Any founded report of child abuse within the preceding five year period in the statewide database is maintained by the Department of Human Resources.

### **Sexual Harassment Training**

Through the services of Workplace Answers, the Office of Human Resources offers online training to faculty, staff, and students of California University of Pennsylvania. All graduate students, including Graduate Assistants, must complete the university-offered online sexual harassment training.

Training modules are available at <https://www.calu.edu/inside/faculty-staff/administrative-offices/human-resources/equal-opportunity/required-training.aspx>.

California University of Pennsylvania is committed to Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity/Affirmative Action and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation and/or physical or mental disability.

## **FERPA Regulations**

Often, Graduate Assistants interact with students and/or student records, including academics, financial aid, billing, and other personal information. All student information and records are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). FERPA is a federal law that protects students from any persons gaining access to their student records without their permission. When a position requires a Graduate Assistant to interact with student records, the Supervisor reviews the relevant FERPA regulations, provides training in handling student information, and requires the Graduate Assistant to sign a form to verify their understanding of and intent to follow FERPA regulations.

## **Graduate Assistant Hiring Form**

A fully executed *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* must be completed and emailed to both Student Accounts and to Payroll each semester. Payroll then provides a copy to the School of Graduate Studies & Research. The Graduate Assistant Supervisor must possess a copy of the form, signed and stamped by Payroll before a Graduate Assistant begins working. No Graduate Assistant may work or complete any assignments or tasks until the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* is fully approved by the Student Accounts and Payroll Offices and submitted to the Graduate School and Graduate Assistant Supervisor.

A Graduate Assistant will not be compensated for work that is completed prior to a *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* being approved and submitted to the Graduate School. If a *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* is submitted after the first week of the semester/term, the Graduate Assistant compensation will be prorated based on the available pay periods in the term.

Graduate Assistants must show satisfactory academic progress toward completing their graduate academic program, as defined by the department and the University, maintains appropriate standards of academic conduct, and honors the terms and conditions of the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form*.

## **Graduate Assistant Tasks**

Graduate assistant tasks, responsibilities, and duties are assigned by the approved Graduate Assistant supervisor. Graduate assistant work hours and tasks must be recorded and saved on the official *Graduate Assistant Timesheet*, which is available for download on the Forms and Student Resources web page of the School of Graduate Studies & Research.

<https://www.calu.edu/costs-aid/financial-aid/graduate-assistantships.aspx>

## **Enrollment Requirements**

A Graduate Assistant must be enrolled in the School of Graduate Studies & Research at California University of Pennsylvania in good academic standing (3.00 GPA or higher), actively attending classes, and satisfactorily performing assigned tasks. A 300-hour Graduate Assistant must be in good academic standing and be enrolled for nine (9) or more credits as a graduate student. A 200-hour Graduate Assistant must be in good academic standing and be enrolled for at least six (6) credits as a graduate student during the semester or term of employment. A 100-hour Graduate Assistant must be in good academic standing and be enrolled for at least three (3) credits as a graduate student during the semester or term of employment. **A Graduate Assistant may be terminated for failing to maintain good academic standing, for dropping credits below the minimum required, for not actively attending classes, for not fulfilling work assignments satisfactorily, or for failing to meet financial obligations to the University.**

Any drops or withdrawals from classes that reduce the Graduate Assistant's enrolled credits below the minimum required in the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* will automatically result in termination from the Graduate Assistant position regardless of when the withdrawal occurs. Stipends will be terminated as of the date of withdrawal. Graduate Assistants are required to visit the Student Accounts Office whenever any changes take place in their account (i.e., add/drop classes, changing rooms & meal plans, changes in financial aid, etc.).

## **Hiring Form & Term Limits**

Graduate Assistants are hired for one semester/term. A graduate student who holds a Graduate Assistant position may be rehired in subsequent semesters/terms and may be eligible to hold the position for the duration of their first graduate program provided the University approves and funds the position, the student maintains good academic standing, and the Graduate Assistant duties and responsibilities are completed satisfactorily. The number of subsequent semesters/terms during which a student may be rehired into a Graduate Assistantship position is dependent on the length of the student's chosen graduate program. For example, a Graduate Assistant enrolled in a 30-credit hour master's degree program would be limited to 30 hours' worth of GA stipend. Therefore, a Graduate Assistant in a 30-credit program could receive a nine-hour GA stipend for three terms and a three-hour GA stipend for one term. GA stipends are available each Fall and Spring term for three, six, or nine hours. GA stipends may also be available for Summer terms. Students may request an extension to continue as a GA during a second graduate program if it is linked to the first or provides other unique opportunities. (i.e., School Psychology master's plus School Psychology certification).

## **Spring Break and Finals Week**

Graduate Assistants are student employees who normally work when they are actively attending classes and should not work during semester/term breaks, Spring Break, or Finals Week. Under special circumstances and with approval of the Supervisor and the Dean of Graduate Studies, a Graduate Assistant may work during some of these periods. However, the first priority in considering whether the Graduate Assistant should work during these periods is a focus on student academic success. A second consideration is the potential impacts related to payroll processes.

## **Lunch/Breaks**

Student employees, including Graduate Assistants, do not receive paid lunch or other breaks. Graduate Assistants may take an un-compensated lunch or other break during the workday when pre-approved by the Graduate Assistant Supervisor. Lunch or other break times do not count toward the work hour requirements for the position.

## **Vacation & Holidays**

Graduate Assistants do not earn vacation hours or accrue sick time. Graduate Assistants observe the University holiday schedule when offices are closed. Graduate Assistants work while classes are in session; from the start date to the end date of the semester/term. If the graduate assistant is unable to complete their 100, 200 or 300 hours within the term of employment, their stipend will be pro-rated based on FLSA standards. Some Graduate Assistant positions may require work during break weeks. Variations from this working schedule must be noted on the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* and approved before implementation. Requests for unpaid vacation time should be arranged before processing the hiring form. Supervisors may deny requests for unpaid vacation or other leave for business reasons. The supervisor of the Graduate Assistant is required to monitor the hours worked to ensure the total number of hours specified in the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* are met.

## **Workers' Compensation**

The University Workers' Compensation Program covers all full-time, part-time, and student employees of California University for injuries occurring in the course and scope of employment. In accordance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Injury Leave Manual M530.2 and the Workers' Compensation Act, students who work for academic credit or for a practicum are deemed employees. As with all injuries, the university's third-party administrator determines whether the injury is covered by the Workers' Compensation Law. If necessary, please review the University's work-related injury procedures on the Environmental Health and Safety website: <https://www.calu.edu/inside/faculty-staff/administrative-offices/environmental-health-and-safety.aspx>. Please follow the appropriate procedures required for a work-related incident.

## **Termination**

If a Graduate Assistant terminates employment or is terminated from the position, the stipend will stop. If the Graduate Assistant was using payroll deduction to make tuition payments, the student will be immediately responsible for any unpaid tuition and fees and any overpayments issued through Payroll. A student may be terminated from a Graduate Assistant position for cause before expiration of the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form* under certain conditions:

1. Graduate Assistant fails to maintain good academic standing,
2. Graduate Assistant fails to fulfill work assignments, including reporting, satisfactorily,
3. Graduate Assistant violates laws or University regulations which in the judgment of the University affect duties or services performed by the Graduate Assistant,
4. Graduate Assistant violates provisions of the stipulations in the *Graduate Assistant Hiring Form*,
5. Graduate Assistant fails to meet financial obligations to the University, or
6. University ceases to make funds available for the Graduate Assistant position.

## **Graduate Assistant Supervision**

As noted above, Graduate Assistant tasks, responsibilities, and duties are assigned by approved Graduate Assistant Supervisors. The Graduate Assistant Supervisor, who may be a faculty or staff member of the university, is directly responsible for the items listed below. These responsibilities may not be re-assigned by the Graduate Assistant Supervisor to any other faculty or staff member without approval by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies & Research.

### **Responsibilities of Graduate Assistant Supervisors**

1. Requesting a Graduate Assistant position by the established annual due date, including:
  - a. Learning Outcomes- At least three outcomes are required. Terms from Bloom's Taxonomy are used to clearly describe each learning outcome.
  - b. Assessment/Evaluation-Each learning outcome is accompanied by a description of the methods used to assess and evaluate the Graduate Assistant's progress toward achieving the learning outcomes.
  - c. Tasks- All of the tasks, assignments, activities, duties, and responsibilities that will be completed by the Graduate Assistant during the employment period.
2. Finding a qualified student to fill an approved Graduate Assistant position and ensuring that the university hiring processes are completed prior to the Graduate Assistant commencing work;
3. Ensuring that the Graduate Assistant has completed any applicable FERPA training and the sexual harassment training that is a required part of the orientation for all graduate students;
4. Reviewing, understanding, and following the policies, procedures, and practices outlined in the Cal U *Graduate Assistant Handbook*;
5. Ensuring that the Graduate Assistant reviews, understands, and follows the policies, procedures, and practices outline in the Cal U *Graduate Assistant Handbook*;
6. Assigning each task, assignment, activity, etc. to the Graduate Assistant and ensuring that no work infringes on bargaining unit work in relevant collective bargaining agreements;
7. Monitoring the work habits and functions of the Graduate Assistant and providing feedback, re-direction, and adjusting performance, when required;
8. Ensuring that the Graduate Assistant regularly documents and submits to the Supervisor time on task accurately on the official time sheet;

9. Ensuring that the Graduate Assistant never works more than 30 hours per week and not permitting the amount of time missed to exceed the amount of hours in one normal Graduate Assistant work week;
10. Assessing, evaluating, and documenting the Graduate Assistant's progress toward attainment of the learning outcomes for the approved position, and
11. Promptly notifying Payroll, Student Accounts, and the Graduate Dean's offices of any deficiencies in work performance, any changes in employment (including termination and dismissal), or if the Graduate Assistant misses more than the hours in one normal Graduate Assistant work week.

### **Graduate Assistant Learning Outcomes & Tasks**

As noted above, Graduate Assistant tasks, responsibilities, and duties are assigned by the approved Graduate Assistant supervisor. On the *Graduate Assistant Request Form*, the supervisor specifies the following:

- Learning Outcomes— At least three outcomes are required. Terms from Bloom's Taxonomy are used to clearly describe each learning outcome.
- Assessment/Evaluation—Each learning outcome is accompanied by a description of the methods used to assess and evaluate the Graduate Assistant's progress toward achieving the learning outcomes.
- Tasks— All of the tasks, assignments, activities, duties, and responsibilities that will be completed by the Graduate Assistant during the employment period.

Prior to the start of the employment period, and periodically, as needed throughout the employment period, the supervisor reviews the learning outcomes, assessment/evaluation, and tasks with the Graduate Assistant.

Graduate Assistant work hours and tasks are recorded and saved on the official *Graduate Assistant Timesheet*, which is available for download on the Forms and Student Resources web page of the School of Graduate Studies & Research. Supervisors are responsible to submit *Graduate Assistant Timesheets*, when requested, to Payroll and the School of Graduate Studies & Research.