



## SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

### **Graduate Student Employee Handbook**

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### Introduction

Graduate student employees play an integral role in advancing the mission of Rowan University. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has prepared this document to assist students and their supervisors with understanding student employment performance expectations, responsibilities, and rights.

### Descriptions of Graduate Student Employment Positions

There are various employment positions in which graduate students can work. This section describes the most common graduate student employee positions.

#### Graduate Assistant, Graduate Research Assistant, and Graduate Teaching Assistant

The term Graduate Assistant collectively refers to positions that go through SGS approval: Graduate Assistants, Graduate Research Assistants, and Graduate Teaching Assistants. These positions will be collectively called GAs. A general description of each position, GA eligibility, application materials, hiring process, and general work Terms and Conditions can be found at [go.rowan.edu/GraduateAssistantships](http://go.rowan.edu/GraduateAssistantships). GA opportunities vary by semester depending on funding availability. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) does not offer any GA positions; instead, the individual school and colleges facilitate the GA hiring process for individual units across campus. Full-time GAs must be matriculated and enrolled full-time in their graduate program – 9 credits (or equivalent full-time load per dissertation/thesis/capstone research requirements or program sequence requirements). Part-time GAs must be matriculated and enrolled part-time in their graduate program – 6 credits.

#### Research Fellow

The College of Science and Mathematics and the College of Engineering offer Research Fellow positions. Research fellowships are awarded primarily by individual faculty and are paid from their externally funded research grants. Students work with faculty, Principal Investigators, or lab managers on research projects related to their area of academic interest and expertise. In addition, exceptionally qualified Engineering Ph.D. students who have completed their MS degree (or an equivalent number of credits) may be considered for additional teaching assignment beyond the minimum required if they wish to improve their teaching skills. Such teaching assignment provides an additional stipend to the student. Some education-based grants or fellowship, such as from the U.S. Department of Education, may also require a teaching component for fellows.

#### Teaching Fellow

The College of Science and Mathematics and the College of Engineering offer Teaching Fellowships. Teaching fellowships are awarded by the Department, in conjunction with faculty members who express interest in working with that student towards a thesis/dissertation.



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Teaching Fellows teach two 3-credit courses within during the academic year in which they are awarded the Teaching Fellowship.

### Graduate Coordinators

Graduate Coordinators positions are non-academic, non-research/grant appointments who perform para-professional activities for an administrative unit funded by departmental operating budgets. The compensation for Graduate Coordinators will vary, and may include hourly pay or stipends, and may or may not provide tuition or housing/meals as required for the position.

### Resident Directors

Resident Directors lead undergraduate Resident Assistants, handle residential life affairs, and assist with residential life programming and operations.

### Special Assignment Project

Students who perform a special assignment that lasts under two weeks in duration and amounts to no more than \$500 may be paid on a special assignment contract. The student employee is paid once the work product is finished. Students who are already working full-time on campus (e.g. 20-hours per week) are not permitted to be paid on a special assignment contract.

### Hourly Student Employee

In addition to the opportunities above, students may be hired as hourly workers. This could include Institutional Work Study positions or Federal Work study positions. These positions are paid hourly per the minimum wage rate set by Rowan's HR. They are not entitled to tuition/fee waivers. Duties may be clerical in nature as required by the hiring unit.



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### Compensation Matrix

Compensation packages often depend upon funding availability, complexity of the scope of work, and external funder regulations. These are the recommended guidelines for compensation:

Position	Stipend/wages	Other benefits/compensation
Graduate Assistant/ Graduate Research Assistant	Full-time (20 hrs per week): Recommend minimum \$10,000/annually  Part-time (10-hours per week): Recommend minimum \$5,000/annually	Full-time: Typically 9 credits tuition waiver Part-time: Typically 6 credits tuition waiver  Fees and health insurance costs may be covered if department funding permits  Free parking permit if 90% of tuition is covered by waiver  Ph.D. students who are GAs may teach a course related to their GA assignment at the undergraduate or graduate level as departmental needs dictate, provided they meet departmental teaching criteria.
Graduate Teaching Assistant	Full-time (20 hrs per week): Recommend minimum \$12,000/annually	-
Research Fellow (CSM/ENG)	Monthly stipend varies based on funding availability and external funder regulations.	Reduced tuition – Student pays \$1000/semester  Full tuition waiver - Student pays fees + health insurance (if applicable). Fees may be covered if departmental funding permits.  Free parking permit

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<b>Position</b>	<b>Stipend/wages</b>	<b>Other benefits/compensation</b>
Teaching Fellow (CSM/ENG)	Monthly stipend (typically \$1,000)	Full tuition waiver - Student pays fees + health insurance (if applicable)  Additional stipend may be provided for research-based work
Graduate Coordinators	Annual stipend ranging from \$8,000 (for 10-month live on-campus) to \$14,500 or more (12-month live off-campus)	May be paid hourly or receive a stipend. Appointments may be 10- or 12-months. Stipend/wages are determined based on the position requirements. For example, some positions require the Graduate Coordinator to live in-campus housing for after-hours work, emergency/facility response, etc.; housing in a shared apartment facilitate would then be provided. Also may include free parking permit, tuition/fee waiver, and Rowan Bucks.
Resident Director	\$11,500 annual stipend	Includes housing and meal costs; includes free parking permit; may include RowanBucks
Teaching Experience Program (TEP)	Prevailing rate for adjunct teaching	Allows students in the Master of Arts in Writing program to teach college composition while completing their degree.
Student Special Project	Under \$500	
Hourly Student Worker (including IWS and FWS)	<a href="#">See HR current hourly pay scale (pg. 9)</a>	

### General Employment Guidelines

All graduate student employees, regardless of position title, have expectations, roles, and rights during the course of their work.

### Scope of Work

Students may be awarded positions in academic units, research labs, administrative offices, or other sites and are assigned work that are commensurate with their experiences and qualifications (per their employment application and CV) and with the needs of the hiring office. The student's supervisor may be a faculty member, administrator, program director, staff member, or lab manager. As directed by their supervisor and allowable by Rowan University policy, students may conduct off-campus or remote work including, but not limited to, literature reviews, data collection, data analysis, and writing.

### Creating the Job Description

All terms of work should be listed in the job description and agreed upon by the student and supervisor prior to hire including, but not limited to:

- Wages and other compensation
- Regular works hours and location(s)
- Whether, and how often, weekend and evening hours are required
- Whether, and how often, travel is required
  - If travel is required as part of field work or conference attendance, the supervisor should indicate whether mileage costs will be reimbursed through submission of a Travel Expense Form
- Whether, and how often, the student must use their personal vehicle for work purposes
- Workplace dress expectations

### Advertising the Position

[PROFS JOBS](#) is Rowan's system for internal and external job postings for students. All graduate employment opportunities must be posted on PROFS JOBS for a minimum of two weeks. For exemptions to this requirement and to see a quick overview of posting a position, refer to SGS's webpage on [Graduate Employment Guidelines](#).

### Conditions of Work

- All documents including Student employment form, I9, proof of legal name and Social Security Number, and W4 must be submitted to Human Resources before the student can be placed on payroll.
  - New student employees at Rowan may not start work until their I9 is completed. Continuing employment at Rowan in any capacity does not require a new I9.

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- Students may work no more than 20 hours per week while classes are in session and up to 25 hours per week during breaks, including summer break, per the official University academic calendar.
  - Note that hours spent in a research setting to conduct thesis or dissertation research may fall under “unpaid” hours since these hours are part of the student’s academic program requirement.
  - FWS are not permitted to work during winter break or holidays but may work up to 30 hours per week during the summer break pending availability of funds.
- Students may not hold additional on-campus employment if working 20 hours per week. A part-time student working 10 hours per week may hold an additional on-campus positions not to exceed 20 hours per week combined.
- Students are only paid for hours worked and do not receive paid holidays or paid lunch breaks.
- Students who are asked to work more than 20-hours per week should contact The School of Graduate Studies at [graduateresearch@rowan.edu](mailto:graduateresearch@rowan.edu). SGS will work with HR to facilitate a resolution.

### Health Insurance

Full-time students (i.e. those enrolled in 9 or more credits per semester) are required to be covered by health care throughout their academics. If the student does not have external health care coverage, they may opt to purchase a student insurance policy found [here](#). In some cases, the hiring unit may cover the cost of the student employee’s health insurance.

### Vacation, Holidays, Sick Leave, Illness, Maternity and Family Leave

Student employees accrue 1 hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked. If sick leave is used, this is to be marked on their timesheet.

- Student employees who become ill must notify their supervisor as soon as possible. After four consecutive days of absence due to illness, the supervisor may require the student to provide a letter from the physician or other licensed healthcare professional that clarifies health reasons that prevent return to work.
- Maternity or family leave should be discussed with the supervisor as soon as possible to determine how/if the student employment terms and conditions of work can be fulfilled.
- The university recognizes religious observances, and the hiring supervisor should accommodate observant individuals with reasonable support.
- If you have a work-related injury, notify your supervisor immediately.

### Student Responsibilities

- Be in good academic standing per Rowan, the academic unit, and academic program
- Report to work on time, and if circumstances arise, notify your supervisor.





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- Perform all duties in a competent manner.
- Wear appropriate attire for the job as related by the hiring manager.
- Observe university policies including, but not limited to:
  - [Academic Integrity](#) and Graduate Student Academic Integrity (forthcoming)
  - [Acceptable Use Policy](#)
  - [Alcohol and other Drugs Policy](#)
  - [Background Check Policy](#)
  - [Disruptive Behavior and Workplace Violence Policy](#)
  - [Intellectual Property](#)
  - [Off-Campus Conduct Policy](#)
  - [New Jersey State Uniform Ethics Code](#)
  - [Smoking Policy](#)
  - [Social Media Policy](#)
  - [Student Code of Conduct](#)
  - [Student Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy](#)

It is the responsibility of the student employee to review and become familiar with these policies.

### Confidentiality Expectations

Confidentiality and privacy are highly valued at Rowan. We maintain academic, financial, and other personal information about our students and employees. This information is guarded by a system of internal controls that allows access only to those with legitimate business reasons and disclosure only in accordance with the law. As a student employee, you may be privy to information, whether from our databases, paperwork that may come your way, research-related data, or information that is freely provided to you by a fellow student because of your position as a student employee. As a condition of your employment, you must maintain all such information strictly confidential. Divulging information about a student, employee, or human subject and or their families is a violation of the conditions of your employment here at Rowan and will be treated in the most serious way. In fact, it is grounds for immediate dismissal and it may disqualify you from ever holding another job as a student worker. Students, employees, their families, and human subjects have certain rights, protected by law. In order to insure that pertinent law and university policy are strictly adhered to, any requests for information, even requests from law enforcement officials, are to be handled by supervisory staff who, have been trained in the law and practices of the University.

### Supervisor Responsibilities

This graduate student employee handbook also details expectations and responsibilities of the student employee supervisor/hiring manager.

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### Access to Facilities and Resources

- The hiring unit will provide the student employee with suitable workspace when required.
- Parking: Parking permits and fees vary by student employee classification. See Parking Services for more information.
  - Fellows receive free parking permits.
  - Graduate Assistants/Graduate Research Assistants: In order to qualify for a free parking permit, a GA must receive 90% of their tuition from Rowan or be teaching a course at Rowan. GAs who fall into this category should contact Parking Services for more instructions on how to submit about a free parking permit.
- GAs are encouraged to participate in Professional Development activities, both on- and off-campus. Talk to your supervisor about identifying opportunities. You may also reach out to the School of Graduate Studies.

### Supervisor's Expectations

- Be familiar with the GA handbook, Rowan academic requirements, and Rowan student employment policies.
- Verify the GA is in good academic standing before offering employment.
- Complete and sign the GA/GRA Terms and Conditions with the student employee.
- Communicate clear criteria for work expectations and professional dress.
- Provide guidance and feedback to the GA, monitor quality of GA's work, and verify that the required hours are fulfilled.
- Report any work-related GA injuries to the Student Health Center.
- Provide GAs with suitable workspace when scope of work necessitates.
- When possible, make reasonable accommodations to students who are able to work during maternity or family leaves so the student can fulfill their employment terms and conditions. If it is determined that the terms and conditions of employment cannot be fulfilled during this time, contact HR as soon as possible to discuss compensation and work implications.

## Student Employee Performance Evaluations

### Evaluations

Supervisors of graduate student employees are expected to conduct regular performance evaluations. These can be formal annual evaluations or more frequent informal evaluations.

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Issues with graduate student employee performance should be carefully documented and kept on file by the supervisor.

### Resignation and Termination

A student may resign from their student employment position by giving two weeks' notice in writing to their supervisor. The supervisor must notify HR for all terminations per HR processes. If paid on stipend, the stipend will be paid on a pro-rated basis through the last day of work.

A hiring supervisor may terminate a student employee for the following reasons:

- Three or more repeated, unreported absences from work (the hiring supervisor must meet with the student after the first unreported absence to discuss expectations)
- Failure to assume the assigned responsibilities of the job description
- Insubordination
- Moral turpitude
- Misrepresentation or falsification of employment application materials
- Breach of confidentiality
- Failure to meet the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Withdrawal from Rowan University
- Hiring unit financial exigency
- Use of alcohol and/or drugs on the job
- Theft or fraud
- Research misconduct (including disclosing confidential information)
- Violating a Rowan policy
- Others violations determined by the student's supervisor

Students who resign or are terminated will be responsible for paying that semester's tuition waiver and will forfeit waivers for the succeeding semester. Students who are involuntarily terminated are not eligible to re-apply for the same position.

Student employees whose appointments will not be renewed for the following year will be notified by the supervisor at least 60 days prior to the end date of their current appointment. Circumstances which may justify fewer than a 60-day notice include, but are not limited to, uncertainty in funding the graduate assistant position, availability of resources, and course enrollments. If a student employee is terminated due the hiring unit's financial exigency, the stipend will cease as of the specified date of termination, but the tuition waiver is continued until the end of that semester.

### Grievance Procedure

Most disagreements regarding graduate student employment can and should be resolved through informal discussions. If a matter cannot be resolved, the student and immediate supervisor must



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hold a special conference to discuss the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved through this informal process, then the student or hiring supervisor may contact the School of Graduate Studies for further mediation.

Grievances referred to here to only refer to graduate student employment-related grievances. Grievance procedures for academics and other issues can be found in [Rowan University's Complaint Procedures](#).