

**Student and Graduate Appointee Rights and Responsibilities**  
**Department of Epidemiology**  
**School of Public Health and Community Medicine**  
**University of Washington**  
(Revised 11.20.04)

## **I. GRADES AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS**

**Each Graduate Student must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA each quarter. Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater to graduate.** If a student's grades fall below a 3.0 GPA for a quarter, the Graduate Program Director will review his or her academic record and decide whether to take "No Action", write a "Warn Letter" or place the student on probation until the quarterly and cumulative GPAs are restored to 3.0.

**Each student must also make satisfactory progress towards his/her degree.** PhD students who fail the Doctoral Preliminary Examination or the General Examination twice will not be allowed to continue in the PhD program. A Master's student is expected to complete his/her degree by Spring (or Summer) quarter of his/her second year. Master's to PhD students should finish both degrees in 5 to 6 years or less, and PhD students should graduate in 4 to 5 years or less.

A student who exceeds the 6-year time limit for the master's degree or the 10-year time limit for the PhD (measured from the start date of the relevant master's degree from which credits are applied to the PhD program) may be deemed to have not made satisfactory progress by her/his Supervisory Committees and/or the Graduate Program Director. Students who have exceeded the time limits will only be allowed to go on leave with permission of the Graduate Program Director.

A student who has lost her/his admission to the Graduate School by failing to go on leave and has exceeded the time limits will only be readmitted if she/he is able to demonstrate satisfactory progress to the Graduate Program Director to warrant readmission.

Permission to go on leave or for an RA/TA/SA to exceed 50% FTE will not be granted until the student has submitted a current Progress/Plan Form and obtained his/her chair's approval. (Form at [http://depts.washington.edu/epidem/progress\\_plan\\_form.doc](http://depts.washington.edu/epidem/progress_plan_form.doc))

## **II. STUDENT CONDUCT CODE**

The complete code is available in the University Handbook at <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsenate/handbook/Volume3.html>. Violations have varying penalties, which can include dismissal from the University.

### **A. Scholarly Integrity:**

Students are expected to “practice high standards of academic and professional honesty and integrity” (Student Conduct Code). They are prohibited from cheating or scholarly misconduct as defined in the *University Handbook*, including: 1) intentional misrepresentation of credentials, 2) falsification of data, 3) plagiarism, 4) abuse of confidentiality, and 5) deliberate violation of regulations applicable to research. The guidelines for disciplinary action are at <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsenate/handbook/04-09-01.html>

### **B. Standards of Conduct:**

Students’ responsibilities include “respecting the rights, privileges, and property” of others on campus, and “refraining from any conduct that would interfere with University functions or endanger the health, welfare, or safety of other persons” (including threatening or harassing behavior). Students are also required to comply with the rules, policies and procedures of the University and its departments. The policy is listed at [www.washington.edu/admin/hr/pol.proc/work.violence/wk.viol.policy.html](http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/pol.proc/work.violence/wk.viol.policy.html)

## **III. CHECKING STUDENT EMAIL REQUIRED**

The University and the Epidemiology Department **require each student to have a UWNNetID and to check his/her email regularly**, as they send student-related information to your UW email account only. You are responsible for this information. A UWNNetID is also required to apply to graduate.

## **IV. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

### **A. Informal Departmental Procedures for Academic Grievances & for Non-union Employees/Trainees:**

The Department has an informal grievance resolution policy for students and non-union student employees. It is recommended that a student attempt to follow this procedure, but a student may file a formal grievance complaint directly with the Graduate School, if preferred. **The process must be initiated within 3 months of the incident involved.**

1. The student should first try to resolve the issue with the faculty or staff member directly concerned.
2. If the issue is still unresolved, the student may take the issue to the Graduate Program Director, who after discussing the issue with both the student and the faculty/staff member involved, will attempt informal conciliation.
3. Should the issue not be resolved through the above steps, the student may take the issue to the Department Chair. If the student chooses to pursue the issue, she/he must contact the Department Chair within 3 months of the incident.

4. Unresolved issues may be then taken to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the School of Public Health.
5. If either the Graduate Program Director, Department Chair or Associate Dean are involved in the complaint, another faculty member may be appointed by the next person above the involved faculty member in the chain of authority.
6. The student is allowed to skip any of the steps mentioned above and appeal to the next level.
7. If the issue remains unresolved after consultation with the Associate Dean, the student may file a formal complaint with the Graduate School within 10 UW business days of the conclusion of the attempted informal process. See the Graduate School Grievance procedures below.
8. The time clock is stopped after the last day of Spring Quarter and until the first day of Autumn Quarter.

#### **B. Graduate School Grievance Procedure:**

The Graduate School has grievance procedures in the University Handbook for complaints arising from academic concerns and non-union Graduate Appointments. The procedures are at: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/Acad/gsmemos/gsmemo33.htm>.

#### **C. Grievances from RA/TA/SA's Belonging to the Union:**

The UAW/UW contact supports “the resolution of problems at the lowest possible level and . . . encourage[s] informal discussions to resolve problems without the grievance procedure. Prior to initiating a grievance, the aggrieved party is encouraged to discuss the matter with the immediate supervisor. If requested, a Union representative may be involved in the discussion.” (Article 8:3) **The deadline for filing a formal grievance is 21 days from the incident. Other specific deadlines apply.**

The official procedure to file a grievance with the Union is at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/laborrel/contracts/uaw/contract/a08.html>

#### **D. Grievances about Grades & Scholarly Misconduct Allegations**

There are different procedures for complaints concerning these issues at the websites indicated below:

Grades: <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsenate/handbook/04-03-11.html>, Section 2,

Scholarly Misconduct: <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsenate/handbook/04-09-01.html>

#### **E: Grievances about Discrimination & Sexual Harassment**

Discrimination & Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures:  
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/adminpro/APS/46.03.html>

## V. TUITION AND INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS AND PERMANENT STAFF

### A. Tuition Exemptions & Waivers:

Non-resident Post-doctoral Fellows paid through the UW for at least 50% FTE are eligible for waiver of the non-resident differential (NRD) portion of tuition for up to one calendar year starting with the first quarter of their appointment. (The one-year time limit is enforced whether or not a student is registered.) The waivers are not automatic, but must be requested each quarter. Fellows must notify the Epidemiology Program Office ([epi@u.washington.edu](mailto:epi@u.washington.edu)) in advance of each quarter so a waiver memo can be prepared. Those using the NRD waiver must apply for Washington State residency about 2-3 months before a year has passed so the application can be processed prior to the end of a year. **If a post-doctoral fellow does not apply for WA residency in a timely manner, he/she will have to pay non-resident tuition.** International fellows on F-1, J-1 or H-1 visas are not eligible for residency, so will have to pay non-resident tuition after their first calendar year of appointment (unless paid by the fellowship).

The faculty/staff tuition exemption for up to 6 course credits (not including independent study, thesis or dissertation) is available for Post-doctoral Fellows and Permanent Staff paid at least 50% FTE. A Fellow or Professional Staff is eligible if she/he is appointed by the first day of the quarter in question. The UW Summer Quarter starts in the third week of June. Appointments beginning July 1 do not provide eligibility. Classified staff must have been appointed at least 6 months in advance. **All participants must complete the tuition exemption form two weeks in advance of each quarter, pay registration and technology fees, and not register for any classes until the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the quarter.** Applications submitted after the first day of the quarter will not be approved. The information and application forms are at [http://www.washington.edu/students/reg/tuition\\_exempt.html](http://www.washington.edu/students/reg/tuition_exempt.html).

**An eligible employee must pay his/her portion of tuition and fees, such as UPASS, registration fee, technology fee, tuition for more than 6 course credits, etc., by the tuition deadline. If an employee fails to pay by the deadline, he/she will be charged a late payment fee of up to \$120.**

### B. Insurance:

A Post-doctoral Fellow or Permanent Staff with at a minimum of 50% FTE paid by the UW is eligible for Faculty/Staff Insurance starting the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month following his/her appointment start date or the 1<sup>st</sup> day of his/her appointment if on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. He or she must select insurance plans during the first 30 days of employment. **If an employee completes his/her appointment paperwork late (W-4, I-9 Employment Authorization, Criminal/Conviction History Form, Washington State Patrol Request for Background Check, Contact Information and Affirmative Action Data Form), his/her insurance will not start until the beginning of the**

**next month.** The forms should be obtained from your fellowship coordinator. Such employees are also eligible for other benefits, such as the Voluntary Investment Plan. Information and enrollment forms are at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/benefits/>.

## **VI. RA/TA/SA & PREDOCTORAL TRAINEE RESPONSIBILITIES, EXPECTATIONS & RIGHTS**

(This section does not apply to a post-doctoral fellow, unless she/he also holds a RA, TA or SA position.)

The following overview describes the normal responsibilities, expectations and rights for Research, Teaching and Staff Assistantships and Predoctoral Fellows in the Department of Epidemiology. Many of you will hold one or both of these positions sometime during your degree program so please retain this form.

### **A. Enrollment Requirements:**

**You must enroll for at least 10 credits/quarter during the academic year and for at least 2 credits in the summer if you have an eligible appointment.** (A student who only holds an RA/TA/SA appointment(s) that totals less than 20 hours/week or a fellowship that pays less than \$500/month, must register for at least 2 credits.) Some fellowships may have higher credit requirements, especially in the summer. Each student should check with his/her Fellowship Coordinator.

### **B. Graduate Appointee Insurance Plan (GAIP) Eligibility:**

(Not the same as Student Accident and Sickness Insurance through the registration system, which has little or no dental and vision insurance.)

Complete information is available at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/benefits/gaip/eligibility.html> - selfpay

You must be funded at the required level (below) for at least 5 out of 6 half-month pay periods during a fiscal quarter to be eligible for that quarter. In summer, you must be funded for at least 2 consecutive pay periods starting no later than July 1. (If you receive UW-paid insurance for Autumn through Spring Quarters, Summer Quarter is provided even if you do not hold an appointment.) The fiscal quarters are as follows:

Autumn: September 16-December 15 (Must start by October 1.)

Winter: December 16-March 15 (Must start by January 1.)

Spring: March 16-June 15 (Must start by April 1.)

Summer: June 16-September 15 (Must start by July 1.)

Predocctoral Trainees must earn at least \$800/month.

RA/TA/SAs must have an appointment of at least 50% FTE or 20 hours/week. They can have one RA/TA/SA appointment or two that total 20 hours/week.

Appointees must be paid through the UW. (For Self-pay eligibility see GAIP website at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/benefits/gaip/eligibility.html> - selfpay.)

An ineligible trainee appointment plus an ineligible RA appointment cannot be combined to provide eligibility for insurance.

**Initial quarterly registration must take place by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of quarter in order to be insured.** (Late registration fees are in effect after the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the quarter.)

**If an eligible graduate appointee completes his/her appointment paperwork late** (Appointment acceptance, W-4, I-9 Employment Authorization, Criminal History Information Supplement, Washington State Patrol Background Check Authorization, Contact Information and Affirmative Action Data Form), **his/her insurance will not start until the beginning of the next month.** The forms are in the orientation packets. If you are paid through the Epidemiology Department, send the forms to Epidemiology Payroll Coordinator, Box 357236, Seattle, WA 98195.

**A Graduate Appointee must enroll within 30 days of his/her appointment start date or he/she will not be insured. We strongly recommend enrolling prior to the start of the initial quarter. All eligible participants must re-enroll for Autumn Quarter of each year.** The online form and plan details are at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/benefits/gaip/gaip.html>.

### **C. Tuition Support Eligibility and Levels:**

An RA/TA/SA working at least 20 hours/week is eligible to have the non-resident differential (NRD) and the resident operating fee waived if he/she meets the conditions listed under GAIP insurance. She/he must pay the student fees, which are currently about \$250 quarter and optional fees, such as UPASS.

A Predoctoral Trainee earning at least \$500/month is eligible to have the non-resident differential portion of tuition waived if he/she is appointed 5 out of 6 pay periods per quarter. Predoctoral trainees often receive partial to full resident tuition support depending on the grant. Please note that an NRD waiver is not automatic, but require a form each quarter from the Epidemiology Program Office. **If you obtain a trainee position, you must notify [epi@u.washington.edu](mailto:epi@u.washington.edu) in advance of the quarter so the form can be submitted on time.**

**The UW does not send paper tuition statements. All student bills are through the MyUW registration system (<http://myuw.washington.edu>).** Some of the tuition waivers and support payments may not appear on your tuition statement at the beginning of the quarter. You should not worry unless they don't appear on your account by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the quarter. If there is still a problem contact the Epidemiology Program Office.

**You must pay the portion of fees you owe by the tuition deadline** whether or not your tuition waivers have appeared. **If you fail to pay by the deadline, you will be charged a late payment fee of up to \$120.**

#### **D. Additional Appointment Regulations:**

**An RA/TA/SA is not allowed to exceed 50% employment during the academic year unless she/he completes the required form** ([http://www.grad.washington.edu/fellow/Grtr\\_50.pdf](http://www.grad.washington.edu/fellow/Grtr_50.pdf)) **and obtains approval from the Graduate Program Director. Approval is generally not given if you still have course requirements to complete. This is true even if your faculty supervisor provides approval.** The Graduate School will notify the Epidemiology Program Office about students exceeding 50% and will cancel payment if approval is not granted.

**Each predoctoral trainee must check with his/her fellowship director before accepting any other employment on campus.** A trainee is not allowed to hold an RA position to support his/her dissertation research. Usually predoctoral fellows can hold an RA/TA/SA position of up to 10-hours/week if approved by the fellowship director. **NIH rules mandate that a training grant appointee work less than halftime at RA/TA/SA or other UW appointment,** although there may be some variation in how this rule is interpreted.

#### **E. RA/TA/SA Requirements and Expectations:**

RA/TA/SA positions are jobs. RA/TA/SA's are expected to conduct themselves professionally, including, but not limited to the following:

- Work on tasks as assigned by the supervisor. An RA, TA or SA position is not an opportunity to pursue your own interests unless your supervisor permits;
- On-time attendance as arranged with the supervisor;
- On-time accomplishment of tasks;
- Individual initiative;
- Consult the supervisor when requirements are unclear;
- Good prioritization and time management;
- Make sure work is correctly and accurately done.

RA work requirements can be very varied due to the wide range of positions, but typically include one or more of the following:

- Literature reviews;
- Study design;
- Data analysis;
- Grant writing;

- Journal article preparation;
- Lab work.

Typical TA work requirements include:

- Prepare and provide class materials;
- Teach lab or problem-set sections;
- Tutoring as requested by students;
- Office hours;
- Review sessions;
- Grading problem sets and examinations.

An EPI TA position for a particular class usually requires that the student has taken the class. EPI TA positions are sometimes 25% FTE to give more students the opportunity to be involved in teaching, but some are 50% FTE.

SA responsibilities are usually administrative.

#### **F. RA/TA/SA Rights:**

RA/TA/SA rights and responsibilities under the University are delineated in the University Handbook at <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsenate/handbook/04-04-06.htm>. (In the process of being updated as of 2004.)

#### **G. RA/TA/SA Terms of Employment:**

The UAW/UW Union contract governs most aspects of RA/TA/SA hours, salary, vacations, sick leave and union dues. The contract is at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/laborrel/contracts/uaw/addons/>. RA/TA/SA's are responsible for familiarizing themselves with their rights and responsibilities under the contract and for following required procedures

#### **Union Eligibility:**

An RA/TA/SA who works at least 110 hours/year will be eligible for Union membership.

It has not been determined yet to what extent predoctoral trainees will be covered by the bargaining agreement. A final determination will be reached sometime during Autumn Quarter by the UW Administration. If a certain trainee ends up in the union, she/he will have to pay union dues.

If you are eligible for the Union, you can choose to be a member and pay Union dues or choose not to be a member and pay a slightly lower service fee within 30 days for your employment start date.

## **RA/TA/SA Work Schedules:**

**An RA, TA or SA is required to work during University breaks if his/her appointment covers those dates**, which most quarterly appointments do. Graduate Appointees are not required to work on days the University is closed for holidays.

**50% RA/TA/SA's are required to work 220 hours/quarter, but not more.  
25% RA/TA/SA's are required to work 110 hours/quarter, but not more.**

**You must notify supervisor when you think you will exceed the hour limit** so that your workload can be modified or your supervisor can arrange to pay you extra. **If you do not notify your supervisor and gain permission in advance to exceed the limit, you will not be paid extra.**

## **Vacation and Sick Leave:**

### *Vacation:*

- If you work 20 hours/week for a quarter or more, you will be eligible for five 4-hour days holiday per quarter.
- It does not decrease the 220 hour/quarter work requirement.
- The timing must be acceptable to your supervisor.
- If your appointment started on September 16 and you did not start working that date, you have used up however many days you didn't work.

### *Sick Leave:*

- You are also eligible for up to seven 4-hour sick leave days per year.
- The sick leave days do not reduce the 220-hour work requirement.
- The sick leave days must be requested from your supervisor in advance if possible.

### *Less than 50% FTE Positions:*

- Union members who work less than 20 hours/week receive vacation and sick leave on a prorated basis. For example, a 10 hour/week RA/TA/SA receives five 2-hour days vacation per quarter and seven 2-hour sick leave days per quarter.

Although the Graduate School materials mention that most appointments start on certain dates, such as September 16, this is not a requirement. For example, many of our RAs have appointments from October 1 to June 30. If a 9-month appointment starts on September 16, it would end June 15. **If your appointment starts September 16, you are expected to arrive in advance of that date, complete the paperwork and be ready to work as of September 16.**

## H. RA/TA/SA Evaluation and Complaints:

- 1. TA Evaluation:** According to Graduate School Memorandum 14 (<http://www.grad.washington.edu/Acad/gsmemos/gsmemo14.htm>), each new TA must be observed at least once/quarter during his/her first 2 quarters. A TA may provide input to the review process, e.g. by providing the faculty reviewer with the course material that she/he has developed for the class or by suggesting which sessions would be best to observe. Experienced TA's should be evaluated at least once per year. Memorandum 14 also has language describing how students can express concern or complaints about TAs.
- 2. RA/SA Evaluation:** According to the Faculty Senate Handbook RA/SA's should be evaluated at least once per year.
- 3. Evaluation Forms:** Forms are at <http://depts.washington.edu/epidem/GSAforms.htm>. It is recommended that each RA/TA/SA remind his or her faculty member of the need to be evaluated. The faculty member should provide a written evaluation by the last day of the quarter. If an RA/TA/SA wishes to make a written reply to the evaluation, she/he must do so by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the following quarter. Each RA/TA/SA has a right to attach statements to any other items in his/her employment file and to have incorrect information removed.

## I. International and Permanent Resident TAs:

International and permanent resident TA's **must take and pass the SPEAK Test (230) offered by UW or the Test of Spoken English (55) prior to appointment.** (Contact Educational Assessment at 206-543-1170 for registration procedures for the SPEAK Test.) **They must participate in the International TA Program at Center for Instructional Development and Research (206-543-0699) during their first two quarters.** The program provides observation and consultation as described in Graduate School Memorandum 15

(<http://www.grad.washington.edu/Acad/gsmemos/gsmemo15.htm>). **The requirements apply even if a student has lived in the U.S. all his/her life and is completely fluent.**

## J. Predoctoral Fellow/Trainee Rights and Responsibilities:

Predoctoral Trainees and Fellows should also refer to Executive Order 30 for information concerning their responsibilities and rights at <http://www.washington.edu/facsenate/handbook/04-04-08.htm>.

**K. Procedural and Policy Changes:** This document is subject to change without notice. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of changes to University, Union and departmental policies and procedures.