HIRING GRADUATE STUDENT ASSISTANTS (RA/TA)

Section 1: ESSENTIALS

1. **The offer of an assistantship is an offer of employment.** All academic student positions are under a union-covered contract, which we are bound by. This is why HR is involved in the process.

   Academic Student Employee Contract:  
   http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/laborrel/contracts/uaw/contract/preamble.html

2. **50% FTE appointments (20 hours a week) generally include benefits and tuition for the student, often with tuition covered by a budget supporting the position.** (See Section 3: FAQ for “How much will it cost...”) These appointments must be on payroll for 5 of the 6 quarterly pay periods (see below) in order for the student to receive benefits and tuition waiver/coverage. This requires that the appointment be entered into the payroll system within the first pay period of the quarter. **Exception:** in summer quarter, it is only required that 50% FTE students be on payroll for 2 consecutive pay periods in order to get benefits and tuition.

3. **Quarterly pay periods begin on the 16th of the month and end on the 15th of the month.** There are 6 pay periods per quarter (2 per month).

   Autumn:   September 16 – December 15  
   Winter:   December 16 – March 15  
   Spring:   March 16 – June 15  
   Summer:   June 16 – September 15

4. **The FTE of the position should align with the duties and responsibilities.** It is most common to hire for either a 25% FTE (10 hours/week), or 50% FTE (20 hours/week) position. There are other possibilities, but they must be clearly justified. 50% positions generally include benefits and tuition coverage for students (see above).

5. **Students can accept two 25% FTE positions, which makes them benefits eligible and means that their tuition must be covered.** This is a great opportunity for students, and could be a way for faculty to benefit from one student’s talents for more than one position. However, students may also combine two 25% FTE positions from two different departments. In that case, departments typically split the financial responsibility.

6. **Pay rate for an assistantship is dependent upon the student’s degree status, i.e., whether they are a Master’s or PhD student, or if they are formally a PhD Candidate.** A student’s academic department can also impact rate of pay. The higher the student status, the higher the pay rate.

   *(Next: Hiring Process/Checklist, FAQ, and TA Authorization Form)*

*Emblem: a Northwest Coast Indian symbol of physical and mental well-being. Artist: Marvin Oliver*
Section 2: HIRING PROCESS/CHECKLIST

Questions? Bree Overly, HR Recruitment Specialist: boverly@uw.edu or 206-543-7952

PHASE 1: department/center approval

Teaching Assistantship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Contact Program Manager to discuss need for TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Complete HSERV TA Authorization Form (see page 4 below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submit to Associate Director for Academic Programs for final approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Director</td>
<td>Forward TA Authorization Form to HR Recruitment Specialist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Assistantship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/PI or designee</td>
<td>Contact budget administrator or designated Center leadership to discuss need for RA and related budget considerations; contact HR Recruitment Specialist with any questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PHASE 2: position posting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Complete Request for Academic Student Employee form (annual requirement): <a href="https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/hserv/244977">https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/hserv/244977</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Receive Request; create position announcement and forward to faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Review announcement, revise, approve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Finalize announcement and post</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PHASE 3: student selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Forward applications to faculty as received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Review applications and interview students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Contact Recruitment Specialist with name of selected student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Check status of student and confirm their eligibility with faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Contact student to confirm their interest in the position (preliminary offer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Confirm interest in position</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PHASE 4: offer letter and appointment completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Create formal offer letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Route formal offer letter for approvals via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. HR Manager</td>
<td>Review offer letter, approve via email to Recruitment Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Review offer letter, approve via email to Recruitment Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Review offer letter, accept via email to Recruitment Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Meet with student to complete payroll paperwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Enter appointment into payroll system to finalize hire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Specialist</td>
<td>Email confirmation to faculty and student that appointment is finalized; provide additional information to student, as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3: FAQ

Questions?  Bree Overly, HR Recruitment Specialist: boverly@uw.edu or 206-543-7952

Q: Where do I find the Request for Academic Student Employee form?
A:  It is a Catalyst form available here: https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/hserv/244977

Q: How much will it cost to hire a Graduate Student Assistant (RA/TA)?
A: Salary varies according to FTE and student status, and tuition varies according to student program and whether or not that program is state-funded or fee-based. Each year there is a change to the salary schedules and tuition:
http://www.grad.washington.edu/students/fa/salaries/salary-schedules.shtml
TIP: Contact the Recruitment Specialist to discuss details.

Q: What does “benefits” mean?
A: For the student, this means receiving medical, dental, and vision care through the Graduate Appointee Insurance Program (GAIP). But, regardless of whether or not an appointment includes student benefits, the budget supporting the position will always be charged a Fringe Benefit Load Rate by the University: http://f2.washington.edu/fm/fa/fringe-benefit-load-rate.

Q: How long will it take for a Request for Academic Student Employee to be processed?
A: HR tries to process requests within 48 hours, but it can take 5-7 days depending on work load and time of submission.
TIP: Submit your request at least a month before you need the student to start working.

Q: What is the process if a student has already been identified for an RA or TA position?
A: In order to hire a student without posting the position and collecting applications, the student must be under an existing advising relationship with the professor/PI or other faculty central to the course or research project. There is a section in the Request for Academic Student Employee form to describe this relationship and identify the student.
TIP: If you have questions about your existing relationship and whether it might apply for the hire of a specific student, contact the Recruitment Specialist to discuss.

Q: If we don’t have a budget number confirmed, can we still complete a Request form?
A: Yes. A budget number will be required, however, before an offer can be made to a student.
TIP:
- For an RA position, obtain a placeholder budget from Leesa Brown, and include that in the “Budget number(s)” field on the form. An update to the budget distribution can be made later.
- For a TA position, you can enter “unknown” in the budget number field. The Recruitment Specialist should have received the budget number with the TA Department Request Form.

Q: Can I hire an RA or TA as an hourly employee?
A: RAs can be hired on an hourly basis for summer quarter only. TAs cannot. Otherwise, no.

Q: If I need to hire a student to do work in a role other than an RA or TA, how should I proceed?
A: Contact the Recruitment Specialist to describe your needs, explore your options, and receive the correct form to complete.
**TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA) AUTHORIZATION FORM**

**SECTION 1**

Faculty name: ____________________________  Date: __________________

Course number and name: ____________________________

Year:  Quarter:  ☐ AUT  ☐ WIN  ☐ SPR  ☐ SUM

Did this course have a TA the last time it was offered?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Unknown

Please list other departments that could be asked to help finance this TA:  __________

Number of hours per week TA needed:  ☐ 10 hrs.  ☐ 20 hrs.  ☐ Other: ______

**SECTION 2**

Job description (check all that apply):

☐ Assist in conceptual design of course
☐ Prepare examinations
☐ Play a major role in coordinating the course (beyond arranging guest speakers, etc.)
☐ Read and comment on written assignments
☐ Hold office hours
☐ Formally teach parts of the course or conduct discussion sessions
☐ Supervise student projects
☐ Other (please list): __________

**SECTION 3**

Budget # for position:  Type of Budget:  ☐ Fee-based  ☐ State funded

Anticipated enrollment:  ______

Program budget approval: ____________________________  Date: ________________  signature required

Department budget approval: ____________________________  Date: ________________  signature required

Routing process:
1. Program Manager for signature
2. Donna Porter, Associate Director of Academic Programs (donnaj@uw.edu), for signature
3. Bree Overly, HR Recruitment Specialist (boverly@uw.edu), for documentation and next steps

Next step:
1. Faculty or their designee must complete the *Request for Academic Student Employee* form (annually):
   https://catalyst.uw.edu/webq/survey/hserv/244977

   This form is processed by the HR Recruitment Specialist.

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