Graduate Assistant (GA) Program Procedures

**General Procedures**

I. Establishing a New Graduate Assistant (GA) position

A. The Department completes a Position Requisition Form (PRF) that includes a description of the GA role and expectations. The Department must contact the Dean of the Graduate School for the stipend amount for each Graduate Assistant.

   1. Since GAs are not employees, Otterbein provides the GA the tuition benefit and stipend.
   2. The hiring Department cannot change the stipend amount without approval from the Dean of the Graduate School.

B. The Otterbein tuition benefit includes six terms that begin no earlier than the month of hire.

C. The Department must obtain signature approval on the PRF from the School Dean (if in Academic Affairs), divisional Vice President, and the Dean of the Graduate School prior to sending the PRF to Human Resources (HR).

D. HR will post open GA positions on the University website, Handshake, and other websites suggested by the hiring manager, and establish a shared folder. HR will place submitted applicant materials into the shared folder upon receipt.

II. Graduate Assistant Selection Process

A. The Department conducts the GA candidate interviews.

   1. The Department confirms, preferably prior to the interview, that Otterbein has admitted the candidate to the graduate or post-baccalaureate program and that the candidate has registered for classes (or will be registering for classes).

   2. If not already completed by the candidate during the applicant process, the Department will provide the prospective GA with an Otterbein University Employment Application (available online or through the Office of Human Resources) for completion and submission to HR.

B. Notification of Selection

   1. The Department notifies the recommended candidate that they are the selected candidate. The Department informs the candidate the offer is contingent on the successful completion of the background check.
2. The Department informs HR of its recommended candidate, offer details, and contact information. Then, HR will take the following steps:

(a) Remove the posting from the websites.

(b) Prepare and send the appointment letter to the candidate.

(c) Provide the candidate the instructions to initiate and complete the background check.

(d) Provide the candidate the Tuition Benefit Request form to be completed and returned to HR.

3. The Department provides the new GA a copy of *The Graduate School Policy Handbook* and reviews the academic standards required to maintain a GA position. The handbook may also be downloaded at, [https://www.otterbein.edu/gradschool/](https://www.otterbein.edu/gradschool/).

C. The Department Chair completes the Personnel Action Form (PAF) for the candidate and obtains the signatures of the appropriate direct supervisor (i.e. Chair/Dean/Athletic Director), the divisional Vice President, and the Dean of the Graduate School, before forwarding to HR. Failure to obtain the necessary signatures, at minimum five (5) business days in advance, will delay the start date.

1. Otterbein approves all GA positions, on a rolling basis, with an end date of May 31st of the current academic year for all GA positions. Most GAs will continue for a second year of service in which case a second PAF must be completed and approved at least thirty days prior to start date for the second year. If the GA continues to work without any break, the Department must submit a new PAF that includes the start date and May 31st end date for the second year.

D. HR will include all GA names on benefit roster shared with the Financial Aid Office and to The Graduate School each term and whenever there is a change in the GA roster.

E. The hiring process is not complete until the background check clears and all Human Resources paperwork is completed.

F. After the successful completion of the background check, HR notifies the candidate and provides the remaining HR paperwork. The candidate returns the completed forms to HR. The candidate must complete a Form I-9, unless the form is already on file in the Office of Human Resources.

G. The 1st day of work is the latter of the date the Form I-9 is completed, or the start date listed in the appointment letter, whichever date is later.

H. Human Resources will send the approved PAF and appointment letter to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will notify graduate program directors of student graduate assistants.

I. The Financial Aid Office will award the appropriate tuition benefit after receiving name of GA from HR.
III. Graduate Assistant Termination of Service.

A. The Department completes a termination PAF, stating specific last date of service for current GA that is leaving position or not returning due to graduating, obtains required approvals and sends the form to HR. The GA may be responsible for tuition and may be required to repay the University for tuition for the term if the GA resigns or is dismissed while a term is in session. The stipend and all tuition benefits will cease immediately upon resignation or dismissal. The PAF termination date should be the last day of the month the GA works. Failure to complete this step, will result in the GA continuing to receive their stipend and the continued receipt of the tuition benefit.

B. The Department completes an Employee Off-boarding Checklist.

C. HR sends copy of termination PAF to The Graduate School.

IV. Renewing the GA for the Second Year

A. After the GA completes their first year, the Department must initiate a new PAF following the process noted in II (C) above.

Stipend Policies

I. Otterbein pays GAs monthly. If a GA is hired after the first day of a semester the first monthly stipend will be prorated based on the actual date of hire.

II. Stipend costs for a GA will be assessed to the respective departmental budget for all new GA positions.

Rev: 01-2020