



Graduate Assistant Appointment Letter Checklist

Per the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Florida State University and the United Faculty of Florida – Florida State University – Graduate Assistants United, signed appointment letters are required for every graduate assistant appointment and re-appointment. Article 2 in the CBA requires the following:

- Appointments may not exceed one calendar year. Graduate assistants may be appointed for an academic year, for a semester, and/or for a summer term.
- Where practicable, graduate assistants who are appointed in both the fall and spring semesters should have an academic year appointment or should have appointment dates that are continuous between both semesters. Departments should prioritize issuing such appointments before appointing graduate assistants for an individual semester.
- Programs cannot use appointment dates to avoid granting benefits to eligible graduate assistants. Appointments on a semester basis must have a **minimum appointment period of a least five (5) business days prior to the start of classes through the last day of finals (as outlined in the academic calendar).**
- If unforeseen or exceptional circumstances arise, a limited appointment may be for less than the minimum appointment period outlined above. In this case, the department shall provide an explanation to the Office of Human Resources, who will review and approve the appointment.
- For graduate assistant assignments that require advanced preparation before the start of appointments, such as course development, planning or preparation, required training (including PIE), or pre-semester meetings, programs shall establish the start date of the appointment to provide a reasonable length of time to accomplish this work. Additionally, for assignments that require grading duties, departments shall continue the appointment period through the grade submission deadline.
- Notice of Appointments: Programs must issue signed appointment letters in a timely manner according to the schedule below:

A. Fall/Spring Appointments- At least 30 days before the first day of classes.

B. Summer Appointments- At least 21 days before the start of the applicable summer term.

Note: If a department does not provide a signed letter by the above deadlines, the department shall notify the employee(s) as to why the deadline was not practicable, as well as provide an estimate based on available information, as to when appointment letters will be issued. If a department fails to issue this notice by the above deadlines, an employee may request that they do so; departments shall have five (5) days to comply with such request.

Minimum Elements to include in Appointment Letter:

| Required Element | | Description/Notes |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If combining student admission letters and appointment letter, use Initial Offer Letter template | Offer letter templates are provided by the Graduate School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Date Issued | |



| Required Element | | Description/Notes |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Classification title and class code | Must include general description of duties associated with class code |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Employing Unit | Applicable department, college, area, center, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Length of Appointment | Use specific dates. Dates should cover any required training such as PIE, SPEAK test, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Statement that no department or University representative may make a binding agreement to reappoint the employee for longer than the term of the contract | Research grants, advisor's verbal promises, and department agreements are not binding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Conditions of employment | Such as: Required background checks, departmental policies, etc. Note: Departments may not restrict or limit outside employment unless it is considered a conflict of interest as defined in Article 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Name of employment supervisor | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>*Effective January 2024* Statement reading:</p> <p>“This assistantship is contingent upon you providing Florida State University required documentation of employability and upon approval to work following successful completion of all university and statutorily required screenings. Additionally, this assistantship/appointment is subject to the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida and the United States, the regulations of the University and the Florida Board of Governors, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Florida State University and the United Faculty of Florida – Florida State University – Graduate Assistants United (UFF-FSU-GAU).”</p> | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Statement that appointment is contingent upon the employee providing documentation of employability | For teaching assistants, include a statement regarding the required certifications/qualifications for teaching status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Percent of full-time equivalent (FTE) assigned | Combined FTEs from all appointments cannot exceed 0.75 FTE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Stipend amount based on appointment | Specific stipend amount |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Statement reading: | |
| | <p>“All graduate assistants at FSU work under a contract negotiated by United Faculty of Florida-Florida State University-Graduate Assistants United (UFF-FSU-GAU) and Florida State University. UFF-FSU-GAU is the labor union certified as the</p> | |



| Required Element | | Description/Notes |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | exclusive bargaining agent for graduate assistants at FSU. For more information about UFF-FSU-GAU, visit http://www.fsugau.org or email info@fsugau.org .” | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | An estimate of current tuition and fees per semester | Updated information can be obtained from Student Business Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | In-state matriculation waiver and out-of-state fee waiver, if any | If attached to the offer letter, this information can be provided in a Graduate Student Fact sheet. Reference the examples for both domestic and international students attached to this checklist. Contact The Graduate School for the current version of these documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Statement that health insurance coverage is mandatory, statement that FSU sponsored health insurance is available, and a statement of the costs associate with an FSU sponsored policy | Updated information can be obtained from Health and Wellness Center or The Graduate School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Statement the Graduate Assistant Tuition Plan is available for all qualifying GA’s and direction to the appropriate link | Information is located on the Student Business Services website under Payment Plans https://studentbusiness.fsu.edu/how-pay/payment-plans/graduate-assistant-tuition-plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Information about where to access the University’s non-discrimination and harassment policies | Located on HR’s EEO website https://hr.fsu.edu/sections/equity-diversity-inclusion/equal-employment-opportunity-eeo |

For questions regarding the above requirements, please contact Faculty Relations at (850) 645-1952.

Graduate Assistants - Letter of Appointment Template

Name

Address

City-State, Zip

Date

Dear <__>,

The <Department/College of > at Florida State University is pleased to recommend you for acceptance to the graduate program in <Major> for <Term,Year>. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and hope that you will accept this offer and join us in <Term Year> pending a final decision from the Office of Graduate Admissions. Once a decision has been made, you will receive an email notifying you that your application status has changed, and you can log into your [Application Status page](#) to see the final decision on your application. If you do not hear from the Office of Admissions within two weeks, contact <Name/Title> in our department at <email, phone>.

< Name> will be your <Temporary Advisor and Program Contact>. <S/he> may be reached through <email> or <phone>. Please feel free to contact <him/her> if you have any questions about the graduate program. For any other questions, please feel free to contact <Name>, the department's <Office Assistant or Other Appropriate Contact>. S/he can be reached either by <email> or <phone>.

The <Department/College of > at Florida State University is pleased to inform you that you have been selected for a departmental assistantship with the following class title and code:< class title and code> for the <X> (academic year, calendar year, or semester), and your employment supervisor will be <supervisor>. You will be responsible for < general description of duties >. The assistantship carries with it a stipend amount of <stipend amount>, as well as a tuition waiver up to < X> credit hours for the <X> fall and spring semester and <X> credit hours for the summer semester (specify if out-of-state fee waiver will be covered). The departmental assistantship offer is for an average of <X> hours per week, < FTE %>, beginning <M/D/Y and ending M/D/Y>, and will be under the < employment unit>.

This assistantship is contingent upon you providing Florida State University required documentation of employability and upon approval to work following successful completion of all university and statutorily required screenings. Additionally, this assistantship/appointment is subject to the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida and the United States, the regulations of the University and the Florida Board of Governors, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Florida State University and the United Faculty of Florida – Florida State University – Graduate Assistants United (UFF-FSU-GAU). No Department or University Representative may make a binding agreement to reappoint you for longer than the term of the contract (for teaching assistants, you must include a statement that teaching assistants are required to meet certification and qualification requirements to obtain teaching status). Continuation of funding is contingent upon academic progress in the program and fulfilling the obligations of the assistantship. All graduate assistants at FSU work under a contract negotiated by the UFF-FSU-GAU and Florida State University Board of Trustees. UFF-FSU-GAU is the labor union certified as the exclusive bargaining agent for graduate assistants at FSU. To find out more information about the UFF-FSU-GAU, or join their action newsletter, visit <http://www.fsugau.org> or email info@fsugau.org. Florida State University is an equal opportunity employer. Prior to the start of your

appointment, you should become especially familiar with the University policies on non-discrimination, non-retaliation, and sexual harassment (<https://www.hr.fsu.edu/sections/equity-diversity-inclusion/equal-employmentopportunity-eeo>).

Please review the departmental assistantship offer below and the academic fee schedule provided for you. Since the offer is based on 20__-20__ tuition rates, the rates may change. Please refer to the enclosed **Fact Sheet** which covers other important information or visit <http://studentbusiness.fsu.edu/> for updated tuition, fee rates and other cost estimates. The Graduate Assistant Tuition Plan is offered year-round to all Graduate Assistants employed by FSU to defer the due date for tuition and fees until the end of the term. For added convenience, plan participants can also enroll in payroll deductions. This plan applies to tuition and class fees only and does not change the due date of any other charges the graduate assistant might owe to FSU. Detailed information on the plan is available on the [Student Business Services website](#).

FSU requires that all prospective graduate assistants enrolling full-time must show proof of health insurance before they can register for classes. A University-sponsored health insurance plan is available for purchase from our health center. **A health insurance subsidy is also offered to graduate assistants towards the university-sponsored health insurance plan. The subsidy is based on your FTE and citizenship – please see Fact Sheet for details and rates.**

Please note that only this written offer is binding. Research grants, advisor's promises, and departmental agreements are not binding.

Sincerely,

<X>

Appointee Signature/Acceptance

Date

Assistantship Offer Estimate Based on Tuition Rates for 20__-20__

FSU FUNDING OFFER

Please review the assistantship offer and academic fee schedule provided for you below. Department funding is available for _____ years subject to satisfactory academic progress and continued availability of funds. Students are expected to enroll in _____ credits during the first 12-months and thereafter _____ credits per year for the remainder of their academic program at FSU (Modify as applicable). Please note that tuition rates and fees are subject to increase.

| Table 1: FSU Funding Offer | | | | |
|--|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | Fall 2022 | Spring 2023 | Summer 2022 | Total |
| Academic Department Funding | | | | |
| *The stipend is provided directly to the student as a bimonthly salary (with taxes and health insurance premiums withheld); waivers post to the student’s my.FSU account and have no cash value. | | | | |
| Assistantship Stipend (PhD) | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Tuition Waiver (In-State) | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Tuition Waiver (Out-of-State) | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Supplemental Funding (e.g. LAC scholarship, one-time additional scholarship, etc.) | | | | |
| Additional FSU Funding | | | | |
| *The Graduate School pays an insurance stipend, but students must pay the remaining insurance cost themselves (see below). | | | | |
| Graduate School Insurance Subsidy for .5 FTE. (For less than .5 FTE insert lower amounts) | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Total FSU Funding | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |

STUDENT’S FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Although the department provides you with a tuition waiver as listed above, you are responsible for paying the academic fees each semester you are enrolled, as well as your portion of the health insurance cost. The estimated academic fee for 2021-2022 is \$105.87 per credit hour for out-of-state students. (Change as necessary for LAC students paying In-State rates). Additionally, a \$20.00 facilities use fee is charged each semester, and a \$5.00 university card fee is charged fall and spring semester. Academic fees are subject to increase. Based on a full-time enrollment of __9__ credit hours each semester, your total estimated academic fees each semester are as follows. (Modify as applicable).

| Table 2: Student's Financial Responsibility | | | | |
|--|------------------|--|--|--------------|
| | Fall 2022 | Spring 2023 | Summer 2022 | Total |
| <i>Paid to FSU</i> | | | | |
| Academic Fee (Out-of-State) <i>(Use In-State fees if student is receiving LAC Scholarship)</i> | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Facilities Use Fee | \$ | \$ | \$ <i>(Remove if student is not expected to enroll in summer)</i> | \$ |
| University Card Fee | \$ | \$ | — | \$ |
| Student's portion of estimated health insurance <i>(Adjust as necessary based on FTE)</i> | \$ | \$ *Students are required to maintain continuous health insurance coverage during enrollment at FSU. Summer insurance is automatically included in the spring/summer insurance payment. | | \$ |
| Estimated Out-of-Pocket Cost to Student | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |

Appointee Signature/Acceptance

Date

Enclosure/s: Fact Sheet, Council of Graduate Schools Resolution