



**OFFICE OF HUMAN  
RESOURCES**

282 Champions Way  
PO Box 3062410  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-2410  
Phone: (850) 644-6034  
Fax: (850) 645-4670

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Deans, Directors, and Department Heads

**FROM:** Renisha Gibbs, Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Finance & Administration Chief of Staff

Steve McDowell, Dean of the Graduate School

**DATE:** December 5, 2025

**SUBJECT:** 2025-2028 Graduate Assistant Contract Administration Updates and Reminders

As a follow-up to the 2025-2026 [Graduate Assistant Stipend Increase and Bonus memorandum](#), dated October 14, 2025, this memorandum reflects additional updates to the 2025-2028 FSU/BOT and United Faculty of Florida-Florida State University-Graduate Assistant United Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). As a direct result of successful and collaborative negotiations with the parties, many updates and changes were made to enhance the experience for graduate assistants. Faculty, Staff, and Administrators should familiarize themselves with the revised [CBA](#). This is important information on new requirements and reminders on other pertinent contract administration items.

**Appointments and Terminations**

The CBA was revised to include the following:

- Graduate assistant appointment letters must include the biweekly pay rate for the appointment period.
- For graduate assistant assignments that require advance preparation before the start date of appointments, such as course development, planning or preparation, required training, or pre-semester meetings, programs shall establish the start date of the appointment to provide a reasonable length of time to accomplish this work. The time provided should reflect both the nature of the work to be completed before classes begin and the estimated time needed to complete it.
- In the event that a department cannot provide an appointment letter by the deadlines established in the CBA, the department shall notify the employee and the Office of Human Resources.
- In the event of a graduate assistant termination due to lack of funds, the university will consider placement in an alternate assistantship.

Other reminders on appointments:

- Appointment letters are required for every graduate assistant appointment, including all re-appointments. Article 2, Appointments and Terminations, of the CBA requires the following:
  - Appointments may not exceed one calendar year.
  - Notice of Appointments: Programs must issue appointment letters in a timely manner according to the following schedule:
    - 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.
- All appointment curtailments, diminishments, or terminations require prior approval by the Office of Human Resources and the Graduate School.
- Where practicable, graduate assistants who are appointed in both the fall and spring semesters should have a continuous appointment, and departments should prioritize issuing such appointments before appointing graduate assistants for an individual semester.

### **GA Performance Evaluations**

The CBA was revised to require that the Graduate Program Director or other appropriate administrator will certify completion of the GA performance evaluation for each employee to the Department Head or equivalent administrator.

Other reminders on graduate assistant evaluations:

- GA Performance Evaluations are required for graduate assistants for each appointment period. For graduate assistants that are appointed on a semester-by-semester basis and will be appointed for the Fall semester and reappointed for the following Spring semester, only one (1) cumulative evaluation is required.
- Departments are encouraged to do evaluations for professional purposes each semester to ensure student professional development and success.

### **Academic Freedom**

The CBA was revised to add language that graduate assistants have the right to enjoy the same freedoms as other individuals, including, but not limited to, political rights, protected free speech, and privileges, without fear of institutional censorship or discipline.

### **Workload**

The CBA was revised to require that departments make a reasonable effort to communicate any changes to assignments (e.g., changes to class sizes) as soon as practicable.

Other reminders on workloads:

- Graduate assistants should be assigned employment responsibilities during the dates of the appointment in the Fall or Spring semester that do not exceed ten (10) hours per week for a 0.25 FTE or twenty (20) hours per week for a 0.50 FTE. For summer appointments, FTE should be proportional to the average hours per week over the length of the entire summer semester.
- Due to the Fair Labor Standards Act exempt status of the nature of the employment, the demands of work will fluctuate, and the hours worked each week may vary. For weeks that have an increase in workload resulting in hours worked above the assigned FTE, the department should reduce assigned hours during the same semester to meet the “average” as listed above.

### **Graduate Assistant File**

The CBA was revised to clarify that all written materials used to evaluate employee performance will be maintained in one (1) file and kept within the graduate assistant's department. No anonymous materials nor confidential medical records shall be placed in the file except for student evaluations, which are part of the regular evaluation procedure of classroom instruction.

### **Outside Employment**

The CBA was revised to add language that clarifies that graduate assistants will report conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment using the university's reporting system (CAMS). Graduate assistants shall request pre-approval for any outside employment or activity that may be a conflict of interest. The administration shall assess whether such activity or employment constitutes a conflict of interest and will either approve, deny, or request additional information.

### **Matriculation and Tuition Program**

The CBA was revised to insert clarifying language that graduate assistants may be liable for tuition and fees for a canceled waiver, except in the case of an approved medical withdrawal without fee liability or other agreed-upon contingencies.

The Office of Human Resources and The Graduate School appreciate your assistance in ensuring compliance with the CBA provisions. Department contract compliance training will be provided, upon request. Please contact Rebecca Peterson, Sr. Associate Director, Faculty Relations-HR, at [repeterson@fsu.edu](mailto:repeterson@fsu.edu) to request training.

Should you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Peterson at [rpeterson@fsu.edu](mailto:rpeterson@fsu.edu).

Graduate Assistant Contract Administration Updates and Reminders  
Page 4

Cc:     Brian Barton                 Lisa Scoles  
         Ashley Jarvis             Alexis Trapani  
         Paul Harlacher           Akin Valentin-Quiñones  
         Rebecca Peterson