

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
☐	If combining student admission letters and appointment letter, use Initial Offer Letter template	Offer letter templates are provided by the Graduate School
☐	Date Issued	
☐	Classification title and class code	Must include general description of duties associated with class code
☐	Employing Unit	Applicable department, college, area, center, etc.

Required Element		Description/Notes
☐	Length of Appointment	Use specific dates. Dates should cover any required training such as PIE, SPEAK test, etc.
☐	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
☐	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
☐	Name of employment supervisor	
☐	*Effective January 2024* Statement reading: "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)."	
☐	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
☐	Percent of full-time equivalent (FTE) assigned	Combined FTEs from all appointments cannot exceed 0.75 FTE
☐	Stipend amount based on appointment	Specific stipend amount
☐	Biweekly pay based on appointment	Specific biweekly pay amount
☐	Statement reading: "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 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."	
☐	An estimate of current tuition and fees per semester	Updated information can be obtained from Student Business Services

Required Element		Description/Notes
☐	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
☐	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
☐	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
☐	Information about where to access the University's non-discrimination and harassment policies	Located on HR's EEO website https://hr.fsu.edu/sections/equal-opportunity-compliance-engagement/equal-employment-opportunity-eeo

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