



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. Effective August 2022, 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"/> | 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"/> | Statement that the appointment is subject to the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida and the United States, the regulations of the University and the Collective Bargaining Agreement | |
| <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: "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 ." | |
| <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 |



| Required Element | | Description/Notes |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| <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.

Florida State University
Graduate Student Fact Sheet for Domestic Students
2022-2023*

1. Academic Calendar

Refer to the Registrar's Website: <http://registrar.fsu.edu/> for important registration and class information.

2. Student Credit Hours/Fees (2022-2023) tuition rate-may be subject to an increase)

Full-Time Status: 9 hrs. /semester with a graduate assistantship; 12 hrs. /semester without a graduate assistantship.

Resident Rate per Credit Hour: \$403.51 + Fees: \$75.81 = \$479.32

Non-Resident Rate per Credit Hour: \$1,004.85 + Fees: \$105.87 = \$1,110.72

For more information regarding other non-credit hour fees, refer to the Student Business Services Website:
<http://studentbusiness.fsu.edu/>

3. Health Insurance Requirement and Health Insurance Subsidy for Graduate Assistants

ALL new graduate students are required to show proof of adequate health insurance, either purchased through FSU or show comparable coverage as determined by the Health and Wellness Center. For insurance information including coverage and cost, go to the Student Health Insurance website at <http://www.studentinsurance.fsu.edu> or call 850/644-6230.

The Graduate School offers qualifying graduate assistants a subsidy benefit towards the purchase of the University-sponsored health insurance. For more information <http://www.gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards/subsidy-benefit> or contact your department representative for details.

4. Financial Aid

Eligibility for student loans is determined by the completion of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online. Any other form of financial assistance (e.g., graduate assistantship, fellowships, etc.) should be reported to the Office of Financial Aid as soon as possible, as these amounts may affect your financial aid award amount. For more information, consult the Financial Aid Website at <http://financialaid.fsu.edu/> or call 850/644-0539.

5. Residency, In-State Status and Academic Common Market

Procedures for obtaining residency are available from the University's Office of Admissions Website at <https://admissions.fsu.edu/Residency/policy/index.cfm>

Academic Common Market: If you are an out-of-state student, and your state of residence does not offer the degree program you seek at any institution in your state, and is a participating state in the Academic Common Market, you may qualify for in-state status. For details, consult the Southern Regional Education Board Website at http://www.sreb.org/page/1304/academic_common_market.html

6. New Graduate Student Orientation

New graduate students should contact their academic program for specific departmental orientation information. In addition to a departmental orientation, The Graduate School offers a New Graduate Student Orientation. The Dean of The Graduate School, Dr. Mark Riley, will welcome students. The goals of the orientation are to provide students with an understanding of what to expect academically and financially as graduate students; describe the professional ethics associated with graduate research and creative endeavors; and highlight FSU's academic and social opportunities and services available to graduate students. For information and registration information visit The Graduate School website www.gradschool.fsu.edu

Graduate School

Rev. 6/2021

***=Please note that these are estimates based upon 2021-2022 figures. New figures will be available in August after the Legislature approves the 2022-2023 rates.**

Florida State University
Graduate Student Fact Sheet for International Students
2022-2023*

1. I-20 Application

F-1 international students use an I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status issued by Florida State University to apply for an F-1 visa, transfer F-1 status to FSU, or to request a change of status in the U.S. Federal regulations require FSU to verify the financial resources of each admitted international student, prior to issuing an I-20. Approximately 3 days after the FSU Graduate Admissions office notifies a student of a status update and their official admission decision shows in the Graduate Student Status page: <https://admissions.fsu.edu/statuscheck/>, international students receive an email from FSU's Center for Global Engagement (CGE) (CGE-no-reply@fsu.edu). The email will include instructions for submitting an I-20 application through Nole Start. Students will not have access to the Nole Start portal and, therefore, cannot submit an I-20 application until they receive that email. The email is sent to the email address used for the FSU application.

2. Student Credit Hours/Fees (tuition rates may be subject to an increase)

Full-Time Status: 9 credit hours per semester with a graduate assistantship; 9 credit hours per semester without a graduate assistantship. Some departments require more credits/semester for their program. Students offered a Latin America/Caribbean Scholarship must enroll in 12 credit hours/semester.

International (Out-of-State) Rate per Credit Hour: \$1004.85 + Fees: \$105.87 = \$1,110.72

For more information, refer to the Student Business Services Website at <http://studentbusiness.fsu.edu/>

3. Health Insurance Requirement and Health Insurance Subsidy for Graduate Assistants

Health insurance coverage is mandatory. International students are required to provide proof of health insurance that meets Florida Board of Governors requirements. For insurance information including coverage, cost, how to purchase the University plan, and verifying that a student has alternative insurance that meeting the coverage requirements, visit the University Health Services insurance website at <https://studentinsurance.fsu.edu> or call 850/644-6230.

The Graduate School offers qualifying graduate assistants a subsidy benefit towards the purchase of the University-sponsored health insurance. For more information visit <http://www.gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards/subsidy-benefit> or contact your department representative for details.

4. Visa

Information about applying for a student visa is available on the Center for Global Engagement's Pre-Arrival webpage, available at <http://cge.fsu.edu/international-students/new-students>. The CGE will include information when sending the I-20.

Please note that visa processing times vary significantly. International students must check the visa appointment wait times of nearby U.S. consulate(s) at: [Visa Appointment Wait Times \(state.gov\)](http://www.state.gov/visa-appointments). If it is not feasible to receive a visa in time to arrive at Florida State University by the semester start-date, we highly recommend that students contact the academic department about applying for a future semester start-date. As soon a student has been admitted to a future term, the CGE can update a student's existing I-20 to show the new dates. The SEVIS ID number remains the same.

5. Late Arrival

The university strongly discourages a late arrival as preliminary data shows that students who arrive late are significantly disadvantaged compared with their peers. Please note that students who arrive late must still complete all class assignments, reading, and other work. The additional stress caused by late arrival may significantly impact a student's ability to complete their first term successfully. Not only do late arrivals need to catch up with past material at the same

time as their classmates are moving on to new material, but they are not able to fully focus on their studies because they must also take care of their personal needs, including: finding a place to live, getting utilities turned on, creating a bank account, finding a mobile phone service, and applying for a driver's license and/or a social security number.

The final decision on whether a student may arrive late for the beginning of an academic term and, if allowed, how late a student may arrive depends on the student's academic department. Furthermore, a graduate student with an employment offer for graduate assistantship may not be eligible for a tuition waiver if they are not present on the first day of classes. Neither the Center for Global Engagement nor the Office of Graduate Admissions is involved in decisions about late arrival.

Please review the visa information above regarding visa appointment wait times and recommendations for what to do if it is not feasible to arrive by the semester start date.

6. Social Security Number

If you will be employed in the U.S., you must obtain a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN). Students who are not working or receiving income in the U.S. are not eligible for a social security number. For more information visit the Center for Global Engagement's website at <http://www.cge.fsu.edu> (Click *Current Students*, *F-1 Status Students*, *Employment*).

7. Academic Calendar

All teaching and research assistants are expected to enroll full-time each semester. Refer to the Office of the Registrar <http://registrar.fsu.edu/> for important registration and class information.

8. New Graduate Student Orientation

Center for Global Engagement: The Center for Global Engagement conducts an orientation to provide important information about healthcare and insurance, maintaining legal immigration status, CGE programs and services, and more. Students receive information regarding the schedule for orientation in the Nole Start portal at the appropriate time.

The Graduate School Orientation: The Graduate School offers a New Graduate Student Orientation. The Dean, Dr. Mark Riley, will welcome students. The goals of the orientation are to provide students with an understanding of what to expect academically and financially as graduate students; to describe the professional ethics associated with graduate research and creative endeavors; and to highlight FSU's academic and social opportunities and services available to graduate students. For information and registration information, visit <https://gradschool.fsu.edu/>.

9. Speak Test

SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) is a test for evaluating the English speaking ability of non-native speakers of English. This is a locally administered assessment test. Students who do not pass the test initially are provided classes in spoken English. Test Information can be found at <http://cies.fsu.edu>.

The Graduate School
Rev 6/2022

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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 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. 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 Collective Bargaining Agreement between Florida State University and the United Faculty of Florida – Florida State University – Graduate Assistants United (UFF-FSU-GAU). 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