The University of Akron

School of Graduate Studies

Graduate Teaching and Research Assistantship Handbook

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FOREWORD

WELCOME to The University of Akron!

We are pleased that you have selected The University of Akron for your graduate preparation, and we are delighted that you have been selected to serve as a Graduate Teaching or Research Assistant for this academic year. As a Graduate Teaching or Research Assistant, you will be employed in academically relevant environments in teaching or research service throughout the University community. The assistantship experience will enhance and complement your graduate studies here.

This handbook was designed to provide you with important and useful information about your teaching or research assistantship. It will serve as a quick reference guide to the policies and procedures related to University assistantships.

The University of Akron is dedicated to the ideals of exemplary scholarship and high standards of achievement that characterize graduate education. It is the purpose of this handbook to provide information that pertains to the academic and administrative processes of providing this financial support. We extend to you the very best wishes from the staff of the School of Graduate Studies for your success this academic year.

INTRODUCTION

The University of Akron provides financial support to graduate students for several reasons. In addition to assisting those qualified in the pursuit of graduate degrees, financial aid also recognizes and rewards scholarship and responsibility, extends the range of academic experiences, and assists departments and faculty in carrying out their academic tasks. Teaching and research assistants are under contract supported by university funds or external funds administered through the University. Duties may include full teaching responsibility for undergraduate courses, conducting discussion sections, supervising laboratories, or assisting faculty with research.

GRADUATE TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Graduate assistants must juggle a number of related roles. At the same time that they are pursuing their own degrees, they also function as instructors, tutors, student advisors, or researchers. Time management and planning are essential; setting goals and ordering priorities are crucial. Above all, graduate teaching and research assistants must plan and manage their time, so they are able to perform their assigned duties while they remain focused on their primary academic goals as graduate students.

Graduate Assistant Orientation

The School of Graduate Studies sponsors an annual graduate assistant orientation. Many departments also offer orientations of their own for students entering their programs; these are designed to provide specific information about programs and teaching and research assistantship assignments. All teaching and research assistants must be available to attend any orientations required by the college, department/school, School of Graduate Studies or International Center. Orientations are generally held the week prior to the start of fall semester.

Graduate Assistant Supervision

Graduate assistants are supervised in their work assignments by the unit in which their work is performed. For teaching and research assistants, the supervisor normally is a faculty member. Since the primary purpose of graduate assistantships is to provide graduate students with academically relevant experiences, it is the responsibility of the supervisors to ensure that this occurs.

TYPES OF AWARDS/APPOINTMENTS

Graduate assistants may be appointed as teaching assistants or research assistants. Appointments provide a basic stipend and/or tuition scholarship. The type of award may vary by college and academic unit and include both full-time (20 hours/week) and part-time (10 hours/week) appointments.

Teaching/Laboratory Assistantships

Teaching assistants participate in undergraduate instruction by teaching and providing support services. Teaching assistants may serve as the instructors of record, laboratory assistants, discussion or recitation leaders with grading and office hour responsibilities. It is expected that this experience will relate to and facilitate the completion of degree requirements and also provide teaching experience relevant to a professional career.

Research Assistantships

Research assistants are assigned to participate in research or research-related tasks directed by faculty members. Awards are made available by individual faculty through grants from industry and government agencies. These experiences are required to be educational and provide insights into the way in which research is conducted.

TERMS, CONDITIONS AND BENEFITS OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Offers and Acceptances

April 15th is the deadline for the extending of and the acceptance of teaching and research assistantship offers. The University of Akron adheres to the Council of Graduate Schools Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees and Assistants which, in brief, states:

1. If a student accepts an offer before April 15th but subsequently wishes to withdraw, the student may submit a written resignation any time through April 15th.

2. If a student has an acceptance in force after April 15th, the student is committed to obtaining a written release before accepting an offer at another institution.

3. An offer extended by an institution after April 15th is contingent upon submission by the student of written evidence of release from any previously accepted offer.

The responsibility for compliance with this resolution rests with the academic departments making the awards and the students accepting them.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a teaching or research assistantship, a student must satisfy all the requirements listed below. Individual departments may impose more stringent requirements at their discretion. A student is not eligible to hold a teaching or research assistantship in an academic department to which they have been denied. To be minimally eligible for consideration, a graduate student must:

1. Gain admission to a graduate degree program. Only graduate students fully admitted to a degree-seeking program meeting academic eligibility are eligible for a teaching or research assistantship
    - Incoming graduate students must have a minimum 2.75/4.00 undergraduate cumulative GPA on a US scale, or
    - Continuing graduate students must have a minimum 3.00/4.00 graduate cumulative GPA on a US scale and maintain good academic standing
2. Maintain graduate enrollment as a full-time student in degree-required coursework
    - All teaching and research assistants must be enrolled full-time in any term in which they are provided a stipend; students must have a TA or RA assignment for the duration of the contract period
    - Students must be enrolled by the first day of the semester and for the entire semester in any term they receive support, or are subject to repayment
    - Tuition remission cannot be banked; it must be used in the term in which it is provided
    - Tuition remission is provided for required courses in the student's plan of study only; tuition remission may not be used for additional degrees or certificates
    - Tuition remission may not be used for undergraduate courses
    - Tuition remission may not be used for courses retaken for change of grade
    - Full-time enrollment is a minimum of nine hours during the fall and spring terms and two hours during the summer term
    - International student teaching and research assistants must also conform to enrollment requirements of their international status; international students should consult with the International Center to ensure they are in compliance
3. Maintain a minimum cumulative graduate grade point average of 3.00
    - Please see Section - *Academic Performance*
4. Show satisfactory progress toward completing degree objectives, as defined by the department
5. Perform assigned duties satisfactorily, as defined by the immediate supervisor and/or academic unit
6. Maintain appropriate standards of academic conduct
7. Honor the terms of the contract agreement
8. Meet oral proficiency requirements (Teaching Assistants)
    - Please see Section - *Oral English Proficiency Assessment*

For students to be paid by the first date of their contract, the completed contract must be in Human Resources at least three weeks prior to the start date of the contract (excluding campus and national holidays).

Academic Performance

1. Good Standing
    - A cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better in all graduate coursework for each semester the student is enrolled
    - A cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better *is required* for graduation
    - Significant digits are employed in enforcing probation and graduating GPA
2. Probation
    - Any graduate student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.00 is considered to not be in good standing
    - The student is placed on probation and notified by their academic College
    - Getting off probation
        - Full-time students have two consecutive semesters (excludes summer) to return to good standing
        - Part-time students have 15 graduate credit hours to return to good standing
3. Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant Probation
    - Graduate assistants may retain their assistantships for the two consecutive semesters while returning to good standing; anyone not returning to good academic standing will be subject to dismissal and will not be eligible for support (this includes TA-stipend and any TA/RA tuition remission)
    - A graduate assistant that is on probation a second time is no longer assistantship-eligible and will lose their assistantship at the end of the semester that qualifies them for probation, a second time. This is regardless of whether or not the student was previously able to return to good standing within one or two semesters of funding
4. Academic Dismissal
    - Any graduate student will be subject to dismissal for the following reasons:
        - Failing to return to good standing following probation
        - A second probation period
        - Failing to make satisfactory progress toward degree completion
        - Accumulating six semester credits of 'C+' or lower
        - Accumulating six semester credits of 'F' will result in *mandatory* dismissal
            - Grades of 'D+', 'D', and 'D-' are equivalent to 'F' at the graduate level
5. Readmission
    - Any graduate student dismissed from the University for academic performance may reapply after one year, provided there is evidence to support an expectation of satisfactory performance
        - No form / generally addressed via email statement
6. Repeating Courses
    - Any graduate course may be retaken once for credit
    - The credit hour value and grade of the repeated course will replace those of the original course in computing the grade point average
    - Courses in which a 'D' or lower ('D+, 'D', 'D-' or 'F') is earned, must be repeated if required for the degree

Oral English Proficiency Assessment

Assessment of oral English proficiency is required by Ohio law and must be certified *before* *teaching* assistant duties can be performed. Prospective teaching assistants must achieve a minimum score of 4.5 on the Speaking Section of the internet-based TOEFL (see TOEFL Test Information at ETS) or a minimum score of 7 on the Speaking Section of the IELTS (see IELTS Official Website Teaching assistants provide an important contribution to the education of our undergraduates. As such, all teaching assistants are held to a higher English proficiency than that required for admissions.

Non-native English-speaking TAs must be vetted based upon testing. *There will be no exceptions.* A copy of the test score must be uploaded in Slate during the application process before the contract can be entered in Workday. Scores older than two years will not be accepted.

Verification of Employment Eligibility and Identity *(Form I-9)*

The *Immigration and Control Act of 1986* requires all employers to verify each new employee's identity and employment eligibility. All teaching and research assistants must complete a Form I-9 before they can be paid. Students will receive notification in their Workday inbox when they are able to complete their Form I-9. Human Resources has the responsibility of reviewing official documents provided by the student for completion of the *Form I-9* for each new graduate teaching or research assistant.

Paychecks will not be issued until the *Form I-9* is completed and Human Resources approves the student for employment in Workday.

Assistantship Funding Duration

University funding is counted in ANY fall/spring semester in which the student receives full or partial stipend and/or full or partial tuition support. The following are the maximum funding durations by degree level:

- Master's students are provided up to two years (total) of assistantship support from the University
- Doctoral students are provided up to five years (total) of assistantship support from the University
- Master's/Doctoral students are provided up to five years (total) of assistantship support from the University
- No student should expect assistantship support for more than five years Renewals of Appointments

Renewal of appointment is not automatic. Reappointments are based on the availability of funding, department determination of satisfactory performance, and department needs. Students may apply for reappointment through their respective departments. Students must meet departmental guidelines and deadlines for application.

Non-renewal

Graduate teaching and research assistants, who fail to meet eligibility requirements, may be denied renewal.

Termination/Resignation Before End of Appointment

Graduate teaching and research assistantship appointments are contingent upon and subject to satisfactory performance of assigned duties as determined by the appointing unit. Appointments may be terminated for cause before their expiration under certain conditions.

1. Termination before end of appointment:
    - Appointee fails to perform services satisfactorily or violates laws or University regulations which in the judgment of the University affect duties or services performed by the appointee; or
    - Appointee violates provisions of Agreement/Appointment; or
    - Appointee fails to maintain good academic standing (3.00 minimum GPA); or
    - University funds cease to be available for graduate assistantships

Before termination for unsatisfactory performance, graduate teaching and research assistants must receive from their immediate supervisors written notice of specific deficiencies in performance, as well as detailed suggestions for improvement. Graduate teaching and research assistants should receive at least two written warnings with adequate opportunities in between to improve. Unit heads should be involved in this process. If unacceptable performance continues, and a decision is made to proceed with possible termination, then, in all cases, the chief administrative officer of the appointing unit must give the teaching or research assistant a pre-termination hearing. The hearing should consist of oral or written notice of the charges against the graduate assistant, an explanation forming the basis for the charges, and an opportunity to present reasons, either in person or in writing, why the termination should not take place. If the outcome is termination, it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from classes. It is the academic unit's responsibility to terminate the contract in Workday.

2. Resignation:

A graduate teaching or research assistant may resign by voluntary mutual written agreement among the teaching or research assistant, the supervisor, and the head of the appointing unit. Notification must be submitted in Workday by the appointing unit to Human Resources indicating the last working day through which the teaching or research assistant is entitled to pay. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from classes. It is the academic unit's responsibility to terminate the contract in Workday.

3. Repayment of Graduate Tuition Remission Upon Resignation:

The graduate assistant is not required to repay any tuition remission if they withdraw from all classes at the time of resignation. However, if they continue as an enrolled graduate student at The University of Akron after resignation of the assistantship, then they must repay the tuition remission based on a percentage of the number of weeks remaining in the semester or summer session.

Examples:

(1) If the student resigns in the ninth week of a 16-week semester, the repayment will be 7/16 or 44% of the tuition remission cost required in that semester.

(2) If the student resigns in the second week of a five-week summer session, the repayment will be 3/5 or 60% of the tuition remission cost required in that summer session.

All remission benefits cease upon award of the graduate degree toward which the support was provided.

Other Simultaneous Employment

Graduate teaching and research assistants may not accept other full-time employment, either in or outside of the University. Teaching and research assistants, holding full-time (20 hours per week) appointments, may not accept

other part-time employment in the University. Teaching and research assistants who want to work part-time outside the University, in addition to their assistantships, must have written approval from their department chair/school director. Such employment outside the University shall not exceed a total of eight hours per week while the University is in session. Teaching and research assistants holding part-time assistantships (ten hours per week) are eligible to accept other part-time employment, either in or outside the University, up to a total of 20 hours/week (for both assignments). CPT authorization is required for international students seeking additional employment.

Duties

Graduate teaching and research assistants, with full-time appointments, shall provide 20 hours of service per week as assigned by the designated supervisor. Graduate students holding nine-month or twelve-month awards may, at the discretion of supervisors, be assigned to work during break weeks if this has been noted as a contingency in the contract. The supervisor will monitor the semester hours worked to be equitable to the total of the 20 hours required per week during the semester(s).

Minimum and Maximum Credit Hour Enrollment Requirements

Graduate teaching and research assistants must enroll in a full-time program of graduate study at the University during each semester of appointment and retain that minimum for the entire semester/session. Full-time study is defined as nine graduate credit hours during fall and spring and two graduate credit hours during the combined summer sessions. The appointment may be rescinded if registration drops below these minimums. Teaching and research assistants holding partial assistantships must also maintain full-time enrollment (nine graduate credit hours fall/spring; two graduate credit hours summer) and are
financially responsible for any additional credit hours not covered by the partial assistantship.

Stipends

The amount of money available for graduate teaching and research assistant stipends is determined by the Board of Trustees of the University and is subject to change from year to year. Stipend amounts to the colleges are approved by the Provost. Stipend amounts to the academic units are determined by the Deans of the academic units with recommendation from the Senior Vice Provost. Stipend amounts to the students are set by the academic units with the approval of the Senior Vice Provost and may differ from unit to unit.

Tax Status of Stipends

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) usually treats stipends paid to graduate teaching and research assistants as taxable income and the University is obliged to withhold income taxes. The Payroll Office will deduct appropriate Federal, State of Ohio and City of Akron income taxes.

Students should contact the IRS directly for tax information or consult their own tax advisers. The University of Akron does not provide tax consultation.

Payroll Procedures

Graduate teaching and research assistants must set up direct deposits to receive their paychecks. The directions and forms required are on the Payroll Office website at [University of Akron Payroll Forms](https://www.uakron.edu/controller/payroll-forms.dot)University of Akron Payroll Forms. All first paychecks

are available at the Payroll Office window in the Administrative Services Building (185 E. Mill Street) while the direct deposit is being set up.

An Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate (W-4), an Employee's Withholding Exemption Certificate (IT-4), and the Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security Form (SSA-1945) must be filed in the Payroll Office to allow proper tax deductions from payroll checks. Blank certificates are available in the Payroll Office. Teaching and research assistants must immediately report changes of address to the Payroll Office.

Payroll Exemptions during the Summer Session

For graduate teaching and research assistants contracted during the summer to be exempt from paying into one of the state retirement systems and Medicare during the summer, students must follow enrollment guidelines published by the Payroll Office each summer.

Remission

The University of Akron shall provide tuition each semester or summer session of award period. Tuition remission is not provided for audit, undergraduate courses, courses outside of the students plan of study, courses retaken for change of grade, or fees. *Graduate assistantships will not be awarded, nor will any fee remission be applied, after the 14th day of any semester or session.*

Holidays/Vacation

Graduate teaching and research assistants do not earn vacation hours or accrue sick time. All teaching and research assistants may observe the University holiday schedule when offices are closed. Graduate assistants who hold academic year contracts will work while classes are in session, including exam weeks. Graduate assistants who hold any other type of contract will work from the start date to the end date of the contract, with the exception of spring break. Graduate assistants, with either an academic year contract or other dates (with prior written agreement from their supervisors) may be required to work during break weeks. Variations from this working schedule must be noted on the assistantship contract. The supervisor will be required to monitor the semester hours worked to be equivalent to the total of 20 hours required per week during the semester(s).

Health Insurance

Graduate teaching and research assistants are not covered by The University of Akron employee health insurance. They may, however, use the Student Health Services, available to all students. Teaching and research assistants may purchase health insurance locally. International students are required to purchase health insurance. Inquiries may be directed to Health Services at (330) 972-7808.

Worker's Compensation

Graduate teaching and research assistants are covered by Worker's Compensation, which provides expenses for medical care and in certain cases loss of salary as well. The Industrial Commission of Ohio pays benefits for injury and/or disability resulting from the regular performance of official duties. Benefits may include compensation losses when disabilities extend beyond one week.

Retirement

Graduate assistants who have a State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) account from any prior public employment are required to contribute to STRS, unless they have submitted an approved STRS exemption form to the Payroll Office. An assistant has 30 days from the start of the assistantship appointment to submit the exemption form. All forms required are located on the Payroll Office website at University of Akron Payroll Forms

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

International students participating in CPT must adhere to the following rules:

- Teaching assistants have classroom assignments and are not permitted to participate in CPT during the contracted dates of their TA assignment
- Research assistants must have the support of their unit and advisor to participate in CPT
- No tuition remission will be provided to students on CPT in any term; the tuition cost is the responsibility of the student
- CPT assignments must align with the start and end date of the semester. If not, the following issues will arise causing the student to incur tuition costs:
    - Students on research assistantships returning from CPT once the semester has already begun will be required to enroll full-time at their own expense
    - Students on research assistantships leaving for CPT once the semester has already begun will have any provided tuition remission rescinded and will also have to enroll in the CPT hour requirement at their own expense – incurring all costs for the courses and changes

ASSISTANTSHIP PROCESSING

All teaching and research assistantship contracts must be entered in Workday. All contracts should be entered into Workday by the academic unit at least three weeks prior to the start date of the contract to ensure timely stipend payments.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Graduate teaching and research assistants are subject to the rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees, the University, and the departments within which they hold their awards. In the performance of their responsibilities, they must abide by the academic and instructional criteria and policies established by the department in which they hold their appointments.

Graduate teaching and research assistants shall respect the rights and opinions of students and uphold the academic standards of the University.

NON-DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT POLICY

3359-11-13 Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
-Effective: June 21, 2025

(A) Statement of policy

(1) The University of Akron affirms its commitment to an academic, work, and study environment free of inappropriate and disrespectful conduct and communication. All students, faculty, and staff shall be protected under the guidelines of this policy. This policy not to discriminate shall extend to admission and employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX and the Title IX regulations may be referred to the university's Title IX coordinator, to the U.S. department of education, office for civil rights (OCR), or both, as provided in the university of Akron gender-based misconduct and Title IX policy and protocol located at: Title IX Policy Document at The University of Akron

(2) This policy shall be widely disseminated to employees and students and shall be incorporated into employee trainings and be included in student orientation materials. Supervisors shall ensure that those under their supervision are aware of this policy. A copy of this policy shall be available at the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and other places as may be specified by the chief human resource officer.

(3) By this policy, the University is providing notice that protected class-based harassment will not be tolerated. This policy will provide the basis for such concerns to be addressed.

(4) It is the policy of this institution that there shall be no unlawful discrimination against any individual in employment or in its programs or activities at The University of Akron because of race, color, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, status as a parent during pregnancy and immediately after the birth of a child, status as a parent of a young child, status as a nursing mother, status as a foster parent, military status, genetic information, or status as a veteran. The University of Akron prohibits sexual harassment of any form in all aspects of employment and in its programs and activities and prohibits discrimination on the basis of any protected class in employment and admissions.

(B) Protected class-based harassment, including sexual harassment, violates state and federal laws. This policy shall be coextensive with such laws and prohibit unwelcome conduct directed towards a person based on their actual or perceived membership in a protected class. Complaints alleging protected class-based harassment, including sexual harassment, will be investigated pursuant to paragraph (E) of this policy:

(1) This policy prohibits violation(s) of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination based on race, color and national origin, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex and religion, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibiting discrimination based on disability, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 prohibiting discrimination based on age.

(2) This policy prohibits violation(s) of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibiting gender-based discrimination and gender-based harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment, where:

(a) An employee of the recipient conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or
(b) Unwelcome conduct, as determined by a reasonable person, is determined to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity.

(c) “Sexual assault” as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), “dating violence” as defined in 34 U.S.C. 1229(a)(10), “domestic violence” as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or “stalking” as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

Additional information concerning the University’s gender-based misconduct and Title IX policy and protocol is accessible via the following link: University of Akron Title IX Policy (PDF).

(C) This policy prohibits retaliation against any student or employee for:

(1) Exercising their rights under this policy;

(2) Bringing forward a charge under this policy; or

(3) Testifying, assisting or participating in any manner in an investigation, hearing or other proceeding under this policy or pursuant to procedures provided by law.

(D) Responsibility

(1) All persons affiliated with the University have a responsibility to implement this policy.

(2) The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action shall facilitate and administer this policy for employees consistent with the terms set forth herein and consistent with the state and federal rules, regulations, and laws governing this institution.

(3) The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards shall facilitate and administer this policy consistent with the code of student conduct for students and consistent with the state and federal rules, regulations, and laws governing this institution.

(E) Investigating, reporting and procedures

(1) Any individual who feels that they have been subjected to protected class-based harassment by a university student, employee or a third-party at the university may file a formal complaint. The University reserves the right in its discretion to file a complaint to protect the university community. Such complaints should be filed as quickly as possible, typically within 60 days, after the incident or conduct in question, utilizing either the informal or formal process. All complaints will receive a prompt and equitable resolution.

(2) Formal complaints alleging violation(s) of Title IX or gender-based harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment, can be filed in person, by mail or by email with the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinators pursuant to The University of Akron gender-based misconduct and Title IX policy and protocol located at: University of Akron Title IX Policy (PDF) Information and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and deputy coordinators can be found at: Title IX information at The University of Akron.

(3) Complaints alleging that a university student, employee or third party, has engaged in protected class-based harassment in violation of this policy, other than complaints alleging a violation of Title IX or gender-based harassment, may be filed with the appropriate office, as follows:

(a) Complaints alleging that a University student has engaged in protected class-based harassment, other than complaints alleging a violation of Title IX or gender-based harassment, may be filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Information and contact information regarding the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards can be found at: Student Conduct Information at The University of Akron

(b) Complaints alleging that a University employee or third-party at The University of Akron has engaged in protected class-based harassment in violation of this policy, other than complaints alleging a violation of Title IX or gender-based harassment, may be filed with the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Information and contact information regarding the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office can be found at: Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action at The University of Akron

(4) Any conduct defined as criminal under Title XXIX of the Ohio Revised Code must be resolved through the formal process. Such complaints may also be referred to the appropriate external agency, including the prosecutor, police, or other appropriate investigative agency.

(5) Formal complaints alleging protected class harassment by a student will be investigated and resolved in accordance with the code of student conduct. Formal complaints alleging protected class harassment by an employee or third-party will be investigated and resolved in accordance with the procedures adopted by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Formal complaints alleging sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination will be responded to and investigated in accordance with the protocols approved by the Title IX Coordinator. The complainant and the respondent will be fully informed of the results of the investigation.

(6) Any student, faculty or staff person accused of protected class-based harassment is entitled to due process as specified in applicable laws, regulations, university rules, policies and/or applicable collective bargaining agreements.

(7) Persons who violate this policy will be subject to appropriate corrective action, which may include, but may not be limited to, referral for counseling, written or oral reprimands, suspension or dismissal from the university, suspension with or without pay, termination, or referral to the criminal justice system. Sanctions for conduct prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 will be in accordance with the protocols approved by the Title IX Coordinator.

(8) Any person found to have falsely filed a complaint under this policy will be subject to appropriate corrective action. A finding that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate a complaint is not the same as a finding that a complaint was falsely filed.

(9) Nothing contained herein shall be deemed to restrict or otherwise prohibit the complainant from filing a complaint with an appropriate external governmental agency, nor shall this policy be deemed as discouraging individuals from seeking legal counsel. It shall, however, be the responsibility of such individuals to meet any agency filing deadlines.

(F) Privacy

All complaints under this policy will be treated with discretion and be discussed only to the extent consistent with an appropriate investigation and response. Only those persons necessary for the investigation and resolution of the complaints will be given information about them, to the extent consistent with the University's legal obligations.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

3359-24-02 Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students
-Effective: March 23, 2024

Complaints involving a graduate assistantship or tuition scholarship award should be brought to the attention of one's immediate supervisor. If a solution is not reached at that level, the department chair/ school director should be consulted.

Purpose
The procedures set forth in this document are intended to provide graduate students with a formal channel of appeal and redress of grievances arising out of their academic and/or employment relationship with the University.

Procedures
(1) Any graduate student who believes that they have valid grounds for a complaint shall attempt to resolve the problem through a conference with the faculty member involved, the department head, and/or the graduate advisor. Following that, the student may attempt to resolve the problem with the assistance of the academic dean. A graduate student presenting a case to the academic dean must provide a full written statement of the grievance, together with all appropriate supporting material. When or if the problem has not been adequately solved at that level or the student wishes to appeal that decision, the student shall prepare a written statement of the complaint setting forth clearly and specifically the allegations and shall deliver or email the written complaint to the Senior Director of the School of Graduate Studies. The Senior Director of the School of Graduate Studies shall notify the complainant confirming receipt of the complaint and shall request all materials from the dean of the complainant's college.

(2) The Senior Director of the School of Graduate Studies shall review the relevant materials and gather any additional information through documents or interviews to make a decision on the grievance. The burden of proof is on the graduate student to show that there has been a violation of the graduate student's rights. The Senior Director of the School of Graduate Studies shall issue a written decision on the grievance

(3) A written appeal may be filed with the Executive Vice President and Provost if the student does not agree with the decision of the Senior Director of the School of Graduate Studies. The Executive Vice President and Provost will assess each case on an individual basis and may appoint a grievance committee to make a recommendation. The decision of the Executive Vice President and Provost will be final.

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding graduate assistantship or scholarship awards should be addressed to the department to which application is made or in which an appointment is held. Policy questions may be addressed to the department or to the School of Graduate Studies.

School of Graduate Studies Staff:
Joseph Wilder, Ph.D. – Senior Director (wilder@uakron.edu)
Heather Blake, M.S. (hblake@uakron.edu) – Director, Graduate Studies Operations

TEACHING RESOURCES AT UA

Institute for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Do you have questions about your role as a graduate teaching assistant at The University of Akron? The University of Akron's Institute for Teaching, Learning and Assessment (ITLA) supports graduate teaching assistants by providing resources focused on improving teaching and enhancing student learning. ITLA offers workshops, information sessions, and training related to professional development, general education, student learning assessment, course design and development, and implementation of technology to enhance teaching. In addition to formal programming, ITLA offers individual consultations designed to provide support and assistance with specific teaching related concerns. Check out the ITL website for more information on upcoming workshops and events: Information Technology Laboratory (ITL) at The University of Akron. You can contact ITL directly at: ITL@uakron.edu.

Online Learning Services

Do you have questions about Brightspace or designing your online course? Online Learning Services (OLS) is a small group of instructional designers and multimedia experts that is part of the Office of Academic Affairs. OLS is focused on helping all faculty (e.g., full-time, part-time, graduate teaching assistants) make the most of Brightspace. If you need a hand organizing your course, need help adding interactivity to your lectures, or want to create a fully online course; OLS is here to help. You can sign up for professional development opportunities (e.g., online teaching workshops) and one-on-one consultations with instructional designers at the OLS website: Online Learning Resources at The University of Akron or by emailing DDSHelp@uakron.edu.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

There are many valuable resources available to you through the Internet. General University information can be obtained from The University of Akron home page at The University of Akron : YOU BELONG HERE! : The University of Akron, Ohio (uakron.edu). School of Graduate Studies information is located at School of Graduate Studies | Home Page : The University of Akron, Ohio Payroll information can be found at *University of Akron Controller's Office*. Please be sure to visit The University's home page for complete and updated information.