



Nichols College

GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Nichols College
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Fall 2023

PHILOSOPHY

Graduate Assistants (GAs) at Nichols College are, first and foremost, graduate students pursuing an education. The opportunity to work with staff in administrative environments is an integral aspect of the overall learning experience.

Graduate students who hold assistantships benefit educationally and professionally. They enhance their experience in leadership and expand interpersonal skills. Skills learned in these roles prepare students for a wide variety of professional opportunities post-graduation.

Assistantships also provide graduate students with the financial resources necessary to pursue their degrees. This financial support is part of the College's mission to expand the education for our graduate students.

Nichols College is committed to ensuring that graduate assistant positions are beneficial to both the student as well as the department the assistant works for. This guideline is subject to change without notice.

**Please note that the Fall 2023 Guidelines apply to all new Graduate Assistants that were hired to start Fall 2023. Graduate Assistant's that started prior to Fall 2023, are to abide by the Fall 2022 Guidelines.*

APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST FOR HIRING MANAGER(S)

1. The hiring manager(s) need to complete the job requisition form from Human Resources. The job description should be attached to the form. The job description should also be emailed in Microsoft Word format to HR (April Girardin).
2. The form must be signed by the appropriate Vice President and then given to (CFO) Pete Tympanick for signature. The CFO will forward the form off for signature by the President.
3. Upon Human Resources receiving an approved job requisition, April Girardin will email the hiring manager(s) that the job requisition has been approved and will post the position to Paycom. **ALL** Graduate Assistant positions *must* be posted to Paycom for fair and equal opportunities. A link of all open positions will also be on the Graduate Assistant portion of the Nichols website.
4. When the hiring manager(s) are ready to bring in candidates, the applicants will go through an interview process conducted by the hiring manager and/or hiring manager(s) of the department.
5. The applicant **must** apply for admission into the Graduate School and be accepted before any other steps are taken by the hiring manager(s). No offer should be given verbal or otherwise. Once the hiring manager selects an applicant, they should notify April Girardin in Human Resources. She will confirm the student's acceptance into the Graduate School and check the student's conduct record with The Office of Community Standards.
6. Upon Human Resources approval, the hiring manager(s) may then offer the position to the candidate. Human Resources will then send the offer letter to the applicant.

7. Guide your Graduate Assistant to continue the hiring process with the steps listed in the *APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANT* section of these guidelines.

APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANT

1. **Before** the candidate is interviewed by the hiring manager(s) for any Graduate Assistant position, the candidate will need to apply for admission into the Graduate School and be accepted. An offer from the Hiring Manager(s) **does not** constitute an admittance to the position until accepted into the Graduate School.
2. In addition, The Office of Community Standards will perform a conduct check if the candidate completed their undergraduate degree at Nichols. Candidates must be in good standing with the college to be considered for a position. This conduct check will occur after the interview process with the hiring manager and before the applicant receives an offer letter.
3. How to apply for admission into the Graduate program:
 - i. Complete the application at <https://slate.nichols.edu/register/graduate>
 - ii. In the application, the applicant must note that they are applying for a graduate position and note the department they are applying for. (Open positions can be found via the Graduate Assistant portion of the website.)
 - iii. Any questions throughout the application process should be directed to the Graduate School.
 - iv. If you graduated from Nichols, you will **only** need to submit a personal statement and resume. The GPS counselor will obtain your transcript and omit letters of recommendations. If you are not a Nichols College graduate, please follow the standard application procedures listed on the website.
4. Once admitted to the Graduate School, you may then apply to an open Graduate Assistant position on the Graduate Assistant portion of the Nichols website.
5. When the hiring manager(s) are ready to bring in candidates, the applicants will go through an interview process conducted by the hiring manager and/or hiring manager(s) of the department.
6. Once the hiring manager selects an applicant, they should notify April Girardin in Human Resources. She will confirm the student's acceptance into the Graduate School and check the student's conduct record with The Office of Community Standards.
7. Upon Human Resources approval, the hiring manager(s) may then offer the position to the candidate. Human Resources will then send the offer letter to the applicant.
8. Human Resources Hiring Process Includes:
 - a. Complete the Graduate Assistant New Hire Checklist. Human Resources will send the link to the preferred email.
 - b. Schedule a meeting with April Girardin to go over and complete any onboarding procedures.
9. Graduate Classes Registration:
 - i. A Graduate School counselor will reach out to the Graduate Assistant to set up an appointment to go over program requirements and schedules.

- ii. Graduate Assistants are allowed to enroll in one degree through the GA program. Any additional degree(s) or certificate (s) expenses are the responsibility of the student.
 - iii. At the beginning of each academic session, a \$175 technology fee (subject to change) will be due and can be paid via the Self- Service Financial tab located on OneLogin or Student Financial Services.
 - iv. Each session there will be a Parking fee for residents and non-residents.
 - v. The summer before the Graduate Assistant starts classes, all students will be required to attend an Orientation session, which will be hosted by a Graduate School counselor.
 - vi. Students are automatically enrolled in classes throughout their program duration by the Graduate School counselors.
- 10.** All Graduate Assistants must provide the following information to Health Services:
1. Health Record form
 2. Student Health History Form
 3. Immunization Record form or a copy of your immunization records obtained from your home doctor, prior school, etc.

All documentation can be found on the Health Services websites and can be submitted directly to Health Services.

ADMINISTRATION

Graduate Assistants at Nichols College are under the direct supervision of the Hiring Manager(s) of that department that offers the appointment. The Hiring Manager(s) determines the GA's assignment and supervises his or her work. The Hiring Manager(s) is the primary source of information for the details of the position.

PERFORMANCE AND ASSISTANTSHIP REVIEWS

The Hiring Manager(s) of each department will conduct a performance review at the end of each academic year on their Graduate Assistant where the results of reviews will be discussed with the Graduate Assistant and shared with Human Resources to be documented in the assistant's file.

Graduate Assistants will have the opportunity to take a survey and evaluate the assistantship experience each year during the last session of classes in the spring. Assistants will be asked to describe the activities in which they have been engaged as an assistant and how they have benefited from the experiences. This evaluation will help the department classify the strengths and weakness of its program.

RENEWAL AND NON-RENEWAL OF APPOINTMENT

Nichols College does not guarantee an appointment as a Graduate Assistant will be renewed each year. Although appointments are often renewed, the College cannot promise and there

can be no expectancy that a graduate assistantship will be continued for the duration of two years.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

As a Graduate Assistant, they must maintain a 3.0 GPA and are governed by all Graduate Professional Studies academic policies. GAs must take a minimum of two (2) classes per semester (Fall/Spring). GAs have a maximum of two years to complete their degree. For any classes that are taken beyond the two-year period, the GA will be responsible for covering the expenses. Graduate Assistants are allowed to enroll in one degree through the GA program. Any additional degree(s) or certificate (s) expenses are the student's responsibility.

TERMINATION AND WITHDRAWALS

Failure to perform duties assigned in a satisfactory manner, or failure to comply with academic/college policies may result in the termination of the assistantship. If a Graduate Assistants appointment is terminated in the middle of a term, the tuition for that class will be prorated for the weeks worked as a graduate assistant. The GA will then be responsible for the remaining tuition for their program.

Resignation from any graduate appointment must be communicated in writing to the Human Resources department and countersigned by the Graduate Assistant's Hiring Manager(s).

DUTIES AND TIME COMMITMENTS

Workload expectations of the department and working hours should be explicit and clear.

Departments are to provide work assignments that GAs can satisfactorily complete in no more than a 20-hour average work week. The actual number of hours required to complete assignments in any given week may vary per department.

GAs follow the academic school calendar. Consequently, if the campus is closed (for any reason), GAs who normally would work those days will not be required to make up the hours missed.

EXTRA WORK OPPORTUNITIES AND HOURS

Graduate Assistants, in addition to their 20 hours per week worked for their assistantship, may work for another area on campus at no more than 9.50 hours per week. These 9.50 additional hours must not interfere with the assistantship position. 29.50 hours per week and 59 hours per pay period, is the maximum a Graduate Assistant may work.

TUITION REMISSION AND FEES

GAs will be eligible for a discount on tuition but will be responsible for fees, which includes the mandatory technology fee of \$175 per session (subject to change). A yearly student parking pass is required for all GAs, regardless of if you are residing on campus or commuting. Applications can be found via the Nichols Hub under Public Safety. (Price varies for Residents and Commuters.)

In addition, based on a first come, first serve basis, there are rooms available on campus at 50% of standard room fees. See the *GA Housing Application and Agreement* policy for more information.

Meal plans for Lombard Dining Hall are not required for GAs but are available. Students may elect for a residential meal plan if they reside on campus or a commuter meal plan if they commute. More information about meal plans may be accessed through the Nichols Hub.

GAs who do not complete their degree(s) within the 2 year period will be required to pay the additional class expenses related to completing their degree.

All fees above will be charged to the student's financial account which may be accessed through Self Service on the Nichols portal.

BENEFITS AND PAY

Graduate Assistants do not receive benefits. They will accrue 1- hour sick time per 30 hours they work based on the MA sick time policy. Taxes will be deducted on a per pay period basis.

Summer work is only available with prior approval from the division's Vice President. It is not guaranteed.

CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

GAs are held to the standards of both Student Life and Human Resources.

Violation of regulations constitutes a basis for disciplinary action in accordance with procedures set forth in the Nichols College Student Handbook, regarding residential concerns, and the Nichols College Employee Handbook, for department related misconducts.

Any residential misconducts will be handled through the Residence Life department and brought to the attention of the hiring manager(s) of your department as well as Human Resources. Misconduct could lead to termination of employment; however, the student could remain in their graduate program at their expense.

GAs may interact with other undergraduate and graduate students. It is expected as a GA to use discretion in all situations that may possibly jeopardize the department the GA works for or the reputation of the institution.

FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCESS

If a Graduate Assistant has a problem, he or she should review the issue with the department supervisor.

If the grievance concerns the immediate supervisor, the Graduate Assistant should review the grievance with the appropriate Vice President of their division where necessary steps will be taken to resolve the grievance.

DIRECTOR DUTIES

The Hiring Manager(s) is responsible to keep track of the Graduate Assistant's earnings to ensure it does not go over the annual budget.

The integration of the assistantship responsibilities and academic program must be carefully coordinated and monitored by the hiring manager(s) of the Graduate Assistant. Graduate Assistants should be assigned space, supplies, and equipment to carry out their assignments effectively.

HOUSING

Housing is not guaranteed for any Graduate Assistant. All inquiries are determined on a first come first serve basis through the Division of Student Life. If the Graduate Assistant chooses to live on campus, they must adhere to all the policies set in place in the Residential Life Housing Policy. Summer housing is based off availability. Please see the *GA Housing Application and Agreement Terms and Conditions of Residence* for more details.