

POLICY NAME: Graduate Assistantships

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2005

LAST REVIEW: April 2016

NEXT REVIEW:

POLICY OWNER: The School of Graduate Studies

PROCEDURE CONTACT: The School of Graduate Studies

Graduate Assistantship Terminology

Graduate assistantships are academically related employment appointments reserved for graduate students. SCSU offers three types of assistantships:

- **Research Assistants** Research assistants participate in research or research related tasks directed and supervised by faculty members.
- **Teaching Assistants** Teaching assistants participate in undergraduate instruction either by teaching or by providing support services. Under the guidance and supervision of departmental faculty members, teaching assistants may serve as instructors of record, laboratory assistants, or test and paper evaluators.
- **Program Support Assistants** Program support assistants participate in the administration of the appointing unit. Both academic and non-academic units employ administrative graduate assistants. Within the context of the hiring unit, program assistants will participate in administrative and educational management processes.

Graduate Assistantship Eligibility

A student must be admitted to a graduate degree program or the 6th year certificate through the School of Graduate Studies and be registered in the School each term of the appointment. International students as well as U.S. citizens and residents are eligible to apply. Graduate certificate/professional specialization program and language admission students are not eligible for graduate assistantships.

Securing a Graduate Assistantship

Graduate assistantships at St. Cloud State are competitive and based on the qualifications of the applicant and the availability of funding. Undergraduate GPA, pertinent experience, test scores, letters of recommendation, educational preparation or appropriate combinations of these factors may be considered in the appointment process.

Graduate Assistantship Benefits

All graduate assistants will be eligible for the following benefits:

Tuition Remission — Both full and part-time master's level graduate assistants, in addition to a salary/stipend, are eligible for tuition remission for graduate (500-800) level credits as indicated by the appointment level. Doctoral students are required to enroll in 6 doctoral level credits and 6 doctoral credits will be eligible for tuition remission. Tuition remission is available to graduate assistants during the academic year. Tuition remission is considered earnings and is therefore subject to FICA and State and Federal tax withholding. The schedule below outlines the amount of tuition remission available. A student must be at least a half-time graduate assistant, i.e., working 10 hours per week, to qualify for tuition remission.

The student must pay all student fees and tuition costs not covered by tuition remission. Tuition assistance is computed only for graduate credits (5xx -8xx) courses), and no tuition remission is awarded for graduate courses enrolled in after the tenth class day of each semester.

- Limited tuition remission may be available during Summer term depending on funding availability.
- Undergraduate preparation courses are not eligible for graduate assistantship tuition benefit.

Resident rate privilege — All graduate assistants, international, and US citizens and residents qualify for in-state tuition rates. Graduate assistants will find the in-state rate credited on their fee statement as a MN RATE Tuition Scholarship.

Salary — Graduate assistants are compensated according to pay rates established by SCSU's administration. Academic year assistantship stipends pay \$9,250, depending upon the hours of assignment and the length of the appointment as noted below. A limited number of competitive doctoral assistantships pay \$15,000 for a full-time academic year appointment. Please note that the stipend is earned income and subject to federal and state taxes and withholdings.

Graduate Stipend	Minimum Target Workload (Hrs/Week)	Graduate Credits Required per Semester**	Number of Graduate Credits Paid for by Graduate Assistantship
\$9,250/year or \$4,625/semester	20	8 or more(5xx/6xx)	8
\$4,625/year or \$2,312/semester	10	8 or more (5xx/6xx)	6
Doctoral Stipend			
\$15,000/year or \$7,500/semester	20	6 or more(7xx/8xx)	6

**International Students please note that the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) regulations require that international students take a full-time load of eight credits per semester regardless of appointment hours.

International students — Students who received and accepted a graduate assistantship appointment, fully signed by the School of Graduate Studies and the sponsoring department, may include the assistantship stipend as income on their financial certification form. A student will also need their graduate assistantship appointment letter when they apply for their visa.

Appointment Policies

The maximum graduate assistant appointment is 20 hours per week. Graduate students may be appointed for a maximum of 240 duty days during the calendar year. Graduate assistants cannot be concurrently employed as adjunct faculty. Graduate assistants may not hold other employment or student employment positions with SCSU while employed as a GA.

To qualify for the tuition waiver, a GA's appointment must begin no later than the tenth duty day of the term and must continue through the last duty day of the term. If a graduate student terminates his/her assistantship prior to the mid-point of the term, he/she shall lose all tuition and stipend support for that term.

If termination of an assistantship occurs before the date stated on the GA Termination Request submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, the effective termination date will be when the School of Graduate Studies receives electronic verification from the department through the online hiring system. All GA compensation earned prior to this date will be charged to the administrative unit responsible for the direct supervision of the graduate student.

Appointment Obligations

The maximum number of hours per week a graduate assistant may work is 20 hours. It is the obligation of the GA and the employing unit to adhere to fair labor practices. GA's are obligated to attend mandatory employee training sessions when requested.

Continuance of Graduate Assistantship

A student must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA each semester to maintain his/her graduate assistantship. A graduate assistantship may not be deferred for use in another academic year. Additionally, tuition assistance is not available during the summer terms. A number of departments do offer graduate assistants continued employment in the summer months at rates of \$12.00-\$16.00 an hour, a rate established by SCSU administration. Generally graduate assistants will be eligible for appointment as a GA for a maximum of two years, unless a department or college maintains a policy of permitting appointments for three years to conduct special research. Most full-time graduate students should be able to complete their graduate program within two years.

Resolution of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States

Acceptance of an offer of financial aid (such as a graduate scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship) for the next academic year by an enrolled or prospective graduate student completes an agreement that both student and graduate school expect to honor. When a student accepts an offer before April 15 and subsequently desires to withdraw, the student may submit a written resignation for the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment was made. Similarly, an offer made by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of a written release from any previously accepted offer. It is further agreed by the institutions and organizations subscribing to this resolution that a copy of the resolution should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistantship offer. A copy of the resolution is available from the [Council of Graduate Schools](http://cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution) at <http://cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution>.