

The logo for the University of Northern Iowa, featuring the letters 'UNI' in a bold, italicized, purple sans-serif font. A thin yellow diagonal line is positioned to the right of the letters, extending from the top of the 'I' towards the top right corner of the page.

University of Northern Iowa™
Graduate College



GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP HANDBOOK

Approved by Graduate Council and Graduate College December 2012
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Graduate Assistantship Position Information

What is a Graduate Assistantship?

Graduate Assistantship (GA) positions are on-campus positions that meet the guidelines approved by the Graduate Council, and are offered on a half-time basis (10 hours per week) or on a full-time basis (20 hours per week). A monetary stipend, rather than academic credit, is provided for work or services performed as part of the assigned duties for a Graduate Assistantship.

Graduate Assistantships are available to qualified full-time students who are working toward a graduate degree at the University of Northern Iowa and who are in residence during the time of their appointment.

Graduate Assistantships are essential to University graduate programs and their students and serve to:

- Recruit excellent students;
- Provide graduate students with part-time, paid work experiences that are complementary to their field of study in order to develop and apply their discipline knowledge and skills; and
- Assist UNI faculty and staff in assignments that support our campus and require advanced skills.

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Types of Graduate Assistantship Positions

There are three categories of Graduate Assistantship positions and they are available in both academic departments and support service departments at UNI. In this handbook, the term Graduate Assistant (or GA) is used to refer to all positions. Regardless of the funding source, all policies and procedures pertaining to them are the same.

1. Graduate Teaching Assistants (Academic Departments)

Graduate teaching assistants at UNI will be carefully selected based on qualifications of their specific disciplines. Students should also be proficient in oral and written communication. Departments that assign Graduate Assistants the responsibility of teaching (either as primary instructor of record, or as assistants working with students under the guidance of a professor) are responsible for ensuring that the graduate teaching assistant has the necessary preparation for the task. This may require coursework in pedagogy or other experience as appropriate to the discipline. It may also include pre-service training or orientation regarding departmental policies and procedures. The graduate teaching assistant will be held to the same requirements on oral competence, which exists for faculty. The conditions under which a student may assume primary responsibility for an undergraduate course must include the following components: a)

proper training, b) supervision and instructional support, and c) teaching performance evaluation/course evaluation. (Taken from Policy on Teaching Assistant Evaluation and approved by the Graduate Council on April 12, 2018)

2. Graduate Research Assistants (Academic Departments)

Research Assistants are selected for excellence in scholarship and promise as researchers. They do research as a portion of their training under the direct supervision of regular faculty members or support the research initiatives of the institution.

3. Graduate Service Assistants (Support Service Departments)

Graduate Service Assistants assist in a service unit whose mission is closely related to the student's area of academic study and interest. They are responsible to a professional member of the service unit who supervises and trains the student in the service role.

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Employment Restrictions for Graduate Assistants

- Graduate Assistants are not eligible for additional UNI employment as an adjunct, faculty, P&S, or merit employee.
- Full-time Graduate Assistantships are twenty (20) hours per week and half-time Graduate Assistantships are ten (10) hours per week for the entire semester.
- Graduate Assistantships are on-campus positions. Your supervisor may determine that some, not all, work can be completed remotely in the state of Iowa.
- Graduate students cannot work more than 20 hours per week of University employment in the combination of assistantship and hourly student employment.
- **International Students:** Federal Law mandates that international students who are employed by the University are strictly limited to working a maximum of 20 hours per week. There are no exceptions to this rule. See the University Student Employment Policy (<http://www.uni.edu/policies/319>). International Students are restricted by immigration regulations from working off-campus without proper authorization. Questions about employment/internships for international students should be directed to the immigrations advisor.

The following actions will be taken in response to violations of these employment restrictions:

- Payroll will monitor University employment hours and will inform the Graduate College (GC) of any violations.
- The Graduate College will communicate in writing to the student with direction that no further violation occurs. This communication will be carbon copied to the departmental employer.
- Students who violate the maximum hours after their initial violation notification could be terminated from their student employee hourly position.

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Graduate Assistantship Job Descriptions

Each Graduate Assistantship position must have a job description reviewed and approved by the Graduate College prior to its use. Each assistantship position must be posted to the Online Job Board ([Handshake](#)) and the departmental website before accepting applications. The Grad College will advertise and display all departmental GA Positions on the Graduate College's website (<https://grad.uni.edu>). The department must provide each student with their specific job description immediately upon starting the Graduate Assistantship position, if not earlier. A copy of the job description should be kept in the student's departmental personnel file.

Guidelines for Graduate Assistantship positions:

- Enhance students' graduate education through:
 - a. exposure to the professional activities and concerns of their discipline,
 - b. involvement in university activities related to their academic and professional interests,
 - c. opportunities to work closely with faculty and staff.
- Enhance our campus community through supporting:
 - a. undergraduate instruction, such as: teaching under careful supervision, providing teaching or research support for faculty, serving as laboratory assistants, and serving in other academically appropriate ways,
 - b. activities linked to scholarship, creative, and community-engagement,
 - c. additional activities such as promoting the University and its graduate programs with stakeholders.
- Have academic and professional value for students.

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Eligibility for Assistantship

Assistantships at the University of Northern Iowa are granted to excellent students. Before an assistantship can be awarded all of the following must be met by the start of the semester:

- U.S. students must possess a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution prior to the start of the assistantship appointment.
 - International students must have graduated from an accredited undergraduate academic program.
- The student must have been admitted to graduate study at the University of Northern Iowa on a degree-track basis.
 - Students who are admitted with provisions due to a low GPA are not eligible for a Graduate Assistantship.
 - Students who are admitted with provisions due to the English language requirement are not eligible for a Graduate Assistantship.
- A newly admitted graduate student must have at least a 3.00 grade point average for undergraduate or previous graduate work of at least 8 graded graduate-level credit hours.
 - The student must maintain a minimum UNI cumulative GPA of 3.00 in order to be eligible for continued or further appointment.
- Applicants whose first language is not English must meet the TOEFL or IELTS score requirements.
- The student must be enrolled in at least 9 qualifying on-campus graduate-level credit hours for each semester during the award.
 - The following CANNOT be used as part of the qualifying on-campus graduate level credit hours:
 - Workshops, off-campus courses, audit, courses taken as credit/no-credit (except courses required by accreditation institutions), undergraduate, CIEP, Guided Independent Study (GIS) and courses through Continuing Education and Special Programs.

- Repeated courses taken in a prior semester with financial support.
- Students in their final semester need a minimum of 3 qualifying credit hours of required coursework to complete their degree. It is expected that all courses applying to the degree meet the minimum hour requirements for program completion established by the Graduate College. A student request should be done for any of these courses that do not automatically plot to the degree. Courses taken for the completion of certificates must be complementary to the degree program.
- Students in their final semester need a minimum of 3 qualifying credit hours of required coursework to complete their degree. The remaining credit hours (6 or less) of coursework do not need to apply to the student's degree program. Students requiring only a few credits to graduate their last semester should consider the financial implications of the decision in taking additional courses.

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Assistantship Stipend

- Graduate Assistantship stipend amounts vary based on the graduate student's degree. The official GA offer letter sent to the student provides the stipend amount for their GA assignment. For the current year's stipend amounts contact the Graduate College.
- Salaries are based on 16 work weeks for the semester. Your stipend will be dispersed through payroll in 5 equal monthly installments on the last working day of each calendar month of your GA appointment (August-December for fall and January-May for spring). Assistantship salaries do not get applied to a student's U-bill. It is the student's responsibility to pay their U-bill.
- Maximum support:
 - Master/Specialist students are allowed a maximum of four (4) semesters of support per degree. Master students who enroll in a Specialist degree or second Master's degree can receive an additional four (4) semesters of support as long as the first degree is completed. If a student is declared in two Master's degrees, simultaneously, then progress needs to be made in both majors in order to receive the additional four (4) semesters of support.

- Graduate Assistantship support or Graduate College tuition scholarship support counts as a semester of support, even if only one of these is awarded.
- Students who must resign their Graduate Assistantship before the end of the eighth week of classes due to a documented FMLA-type circumstance will not be counted as receiving a semester of support. See the section on resignation for more information.

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Benefits

Graduate Assistants must work the entire semester in order to qualify for benefits. All Graduate Assistants, with at least a half-time appointment for an entire semester, receive the following benefits:

- Can purchase an “A” parking permit (“A” permit rates will apply).
- Graduate Assistants are covered by Worker’s Compensation.
- Non-Resident students receive tuition billed at resident rates.
- Non-Resident spouse (partner) receives tuition billed at resident rates (must be requested on the assistantship application form).

Important: Graduate Assistants are NOT eligible for University-sponsored insurance benefits, sick or vacation days. For information on how to purchase health insurance students should contact the Student Health Clinic (<https://health.uni.edu/>).

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Work Hours

- Graduate Assistants with a half-time assistantship should work ten hours per week and those with a full-time assistantship should work twenty hours per week.
- Graduate Assistants:
 - Do not submit time cards. It is incumbent on the student and supervisor to track hours worked.
 - Will typically work from the first week of classes through final exam week (exact dates are specified in the offer letter). Students may have a late start for a variety of reasons or resign from their position and the stipend will be prorated as needed.

- Do not work Thanksgiving week (fall semester), nor spring break week (spring semester).
- Do not work over the winter break.
- GAs do not receive sick or vacation days.
- Illnesses or unanticipated extenuating circumstances may prevent students from performing assistantship duties. If this is a short-term situation, the GA may work with their supervisor and not have a reduction in pay. If this is a long term or habitual situation or the GA is not in communication with their supervisor, a different procedure for withdrawal will occur. The supervisor must contact the Graduate College in these situations. On average, the graduate student should work 10 (half-time) or 20 (full-time) hours per week.

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Summer Graduate Student Employment

The Graduate College does not provide nor supports GA appointments during the summer term. Graduate Students who work on a Summer Assignment, will be hired as a Student Employment position.

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Academic Integrity

Whether working in a laboratory, classroom, office, or other setting, Graduate Assistants must maintain standards of academic honesty and integrity and report any violations of these to their supervisor. It is the responsibility of the GA to follow departmental, college, and university policies.

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Satisfactory Academic Progress

If a Graduate Assistant's UNI cumulative GPA goes below 3.00, their assistantship will be discontinued. If their UNI cumulative GPA returns to 3.00 or higher the student would qualify for an assistantship offer and follow the application process for the position.

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Parental Support and Relief for Graduate Assistants

(Approved by Graduate Council 2/27/14)

Graduate Assistants who wish to suspend their academic responsibilities because of pregnancy, the birth or adoption of a child may request parental support or relief during the semester in which the pregnancy,

birth or adoption occurs. This policy applies to graduate students who are current Graduate Assistants and who are/will be related to the child as mother or father, including domestic partners. If both parents are Graduate Assistants, this policy applies to both. This policy is not mandatory – if the Graduate Assistant chooses not to suspend academic responsibilities during the semester of the pregnancy, birth or adoption of a child, no action is warranted.

Summary of Policy

1. The Graduate Assistant must be currently enrolled in an academic program, and in good academic standing.
2. The Graduate Assistant shall provide the employer with written notice not less than thirty days prior to the date of the requested leave, if practicable. In the case of unforeseen/emergency circumstances only, to the extent reasonably possible the Graduate Assistant must give a verbal notice to the employer at least twenty-four hours prior to taking leave.
3. The GA must provide medical or legal documentation of the birth or adoption to the supervisor.
4. Prior to taking the leave, to the extent reasonably possible, the Graduate Assistant must make all arrangements with course instructors regarding making up coursework during the time of the leave.
5. Students who take a leave from their assistantship due to Parental Support leave will have their stipend prorated based on the duration of their leave.
6. Students who must resign their Graduate Assistantship before the end of the eighth week of classes due to Parental Support leave will not be counted as receiving a semester of support for the purposes of determining the number of semesters of support.
7. If a student is receiving a tuition scholarship, the scholarship will be retained by the student, who will complete all course requirements as determined in item #4 above. If the student withdraws from courses, the student may be required to repay the scholarship amount, as described in current Graduate Assistantship policies.
8. The graduate student who remains enrolled shall retain full access to UNI library services, computing services including email and MyUniverse, health center, sports and performing arts activities, and on-campus housing during the semester of leave, provided the necessary financial

obligations are satisfied. If the student withdraws from all courses, the student will lose access to some of these services.

9. Students may request one extension for a total of up 24 months during their studies, but time limits may be extended for active military service or other extenuating circumstances, at the recommendation of the program and the approval of the Dean of the Graduate College or designee.

Special Considerations

- All graduate students are responsible for determining the implications for eligibility of student loans and loan deferment privileges.
- All GAs are responsible for discussing with their research advisor how a leave would affect time-sensitive research projects and reporting, and the feasibility of resuming the same research project on return from leave. A graduate student may not necessarily be able to resume the same research project after a leave, but will have the opportunity to engage in similar research projects on return.
- International graduate students are responsible for determining the implications of a leave for fulfilling visa requirements.

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Resignation of a Graduate Assistantship

Before the start of the semester

To decline an assistantship before the start of a semester the student should find their original offer letter received via email from the Graduate College. Use the link within the offer letter to access the electronic system. The student should click on “decline” for the semester(s) they want to decline.

After the start of the semester

A graduate student may elect to resign their Graduate Assistantship. To resign an assistantship after a semester begins the student must send an email to the Graduate College (gradcollege@uni.edu) and carbon copy their departmental secretary and supervisor. The email subject line should include their UID, name and indicate “resigning assistantship.” The email body should state that they are resigning the

position and provide the effective date and the hours worked (will work) the last week of their assistantship. The GA's stipend will terminate on the day the resignation is effective, or the last day worked if prior to resignation, and stipend will be prorated. Payroll will contact the student if any overpayment has been made to the student to work out repayment of these funds.

Important: If the student is non-resident and resigns from their Graduate Assistantship early they might be charged tuition at the non-resident rate at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate College.

Tuition Scholarship

If a student has a full-time load in the program of study and maintains a 3.00 grade average or higher, the student may retain their Graduate Tuition Scholarship, if applicable, even if the student elects to resign a Graduate Assistantship. Full-time students in good academic standing cannot be forced to resign their Tuition Scholarship under most circumstances, even if their Graduate Assistantship is terminated because of their failure to perform the work assignments required of their assistantship. However, Tuition Scholarships awarded under an externally funded grant may be terminated as well, if required under the terms of the grant.

Important: If a Graduate Assistant with a scholarship resigns from the GA because of dropping all the classes or dropping below a full-time load, the scholarship might be revoked and the student might be required to pay the tuition charges for that semester at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate College. This charge will follow the [Tuition & Fees Refund policy](#), the percentages of tuition and fees removed are:

Week 1 – Remove 90% of scholarship

Week 2 – Remove 75%

Week 3 – Remove 50%

Week 4 – Remove 25%

Week 5 and beyond – The student gets to keep the entire scholarship. No tuition is refunded either.

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Termination of a Graduate Assistantship

A Graduate Assistantship appointment may be terminated for cause, including, but not limited to:

1. Failure to be enrolled in the minimum qualifying hours each semester.
2. Failure to maintain academic standing (UNI cumulative GPA 3.0 or above).
3. Neglect of duties or incompetence.
4. Constant refusal to follow supervisor's advice/counsel.
5. Failure to comply with assistantship obligations as set forth by department/program rules/sponsored research agreements.
6. Personal conduct that violates UNI student conduct code policy 3.02 (See: <https://policies.uni.edu/302>) state and federal law.
7. Suspension or dismissal of a graduate student from the University due to disciplinary reasons.

The Graduate Assistantship cannot be terminated due to neglect of duties, refusal to follow supervisor's advice, and failure to comply with obligations without appropriate procedures. Before a department recommends termination due to neglect of duties, refusal to follow supervisor's advice, and failure to comply with obligations, it must:

- a) notify the student and the Dean of the Graduate College of the specific nature of the problem or problems in writing, with documentation of non-performance or poor performance of duties,
- b) allow the student a reasonable opportunity to respond in writing,
- c) if possible, attempt an informal resolution through a performance improvement plan to avoid termination,
- d) and give the student written notification of the department's reasons for recommending termination if an informal resolution cannot be achieved.

After the above steps have been followed, the department shall forward its written recommendation, including the reasons leading to the recommendation, to the Graduate College for review and approval. The Graduate College and the department to which the graduate student is assigned have a joint responsibility to ensure that appropriate procedures are followed before the termination. A department

cannot terminate an award without the review and approval of the Dean of the Graduate College, even if the funding is not provided by the Graduate College.

If a student elects to file a grievance under the Graduate Assistant Grievance Procedure, then the procedures therein take precedence over all of the above.

Important: If the student is a non-resident and is terminated from their Graduate Assistantship early they might be charged tuition at the non-resident rate at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate College.

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Grievance Procedures and Appeals for Graduate Assistants

(Approved by Graduate Council 2/27/14)

When complaints or disagreements arise concerning a student's Graduate Assistant assignment, efforts should be made to resolve problems informally. However, if such efforts fail, Graduate Assistants have the option of filing a grievance. There are different types of grievances for different situations.

1. Students who hold, or have held, a Graduate Assistantship, and who have a complaint or disagreement concerning their Graduate Assistantship, may file a grievance according to the steps outlined in the Graduate Assistantship Grievance Procedure in Policy 12.05-Graduate Assistantship Grievance <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1205>. Such grievances are restricted to interpretation or application of established policies and procedures governing assistantships; the grievance procedure does not apply to tuition remission and stipend adjustments.
2. For academic grievances, GAs may use the procedure which is available to all students, Policy 12.01 <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1201>.
3. Appeals arising from suspension or dismissal for disciplinary reasons will be processed under the University's Student Conduct Code <http://www.uni.edu/policies/302>.
4. Appeals from either party in a discrimination or harassment complaint will be processed according to the appeal procedures specified in the University's Discrimination and Harassment Policy <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1302>.

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Supervisor and Faculty Information

Graduate Assistantship Appointment Process

Graduate Assistantships, regardless of funding source, are awarded by the Graduate College and are made under the Council of Graduate School guidelines. The Graduate College shares documentation regarding this process in greater detail in the Graduate College blackboard organization folder

(https://uni.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/_112662_1/cl/outline). The general steps in the appointment process are:

- The Graduate College will notify each graduate program/department of the minimum number of Graduate Assistantships committed to the graduate program/department from Graduate College funds.
 - If the graduate program/department determines at any time they will not use any portion of the Graduate College allocations they should notify the Graduate College so that funding can be made available to other graduate programs/departments.
- Graduate Assistantship decisions reside in the graduate program/department.
 - Graduate programs/departments review all Graduate Assistantship applications received. The department must consider all qualified students; however, continuing students who have performed well should have priority for continued support.
 - The graduate program/department will determine who will be offered an assistantship and at half-time or full-time status. The department will also determine if the offer is for fall semester or spring semester or both.
- By recommending a student to the Graduate College for a Graduate Assistantship, the department certifies that the student meets the qualifications stated in the preceding section.
- Departments should not offer these awards verbally, or in writing, to a student or tell a student that they have been recommended for an award. At most, departments can tell students that “Recommendations for financial support are sent to the Graduate College, which sends out official offers.”

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Graduate Assistantship Offer Process

The steps in the Graduate Assistantship offer process are as follows:

- The department will complete and submit an electronic offer in the EOFS system for each student. The offers follow a workflow approval process, requiring approval from the unit and the Graduate College. Funding from a Foundation account will include UNI Foundation in the approval process.
- Departments should be sure to track remaining funding and offer declined allocation to other students before the deadlines.
- All Graduate College allocations must be offered to qualifying students by early April. Any declined offers through a specified date in May can be offered to another qualified student (see our Blackboard organization site). Students should accept/decline their GA offer before the deadline stated in their offer.
- Unused allocations after the specified date in May will return back to the Graduate College.
- Any declined Extra allocations designated for a specific student automatically returns to the Graduate College. Departments cannot offer Extra allocation funds to another student.
- Specific dates for the offer process during an academic year will be provided and posted on the Blackboard site https://uni.blackboard.com/ultra/organizations/_112662_1/cl/outline.
- Departmentally funded assistantship offer forms are highly recommended to be submitted by April 1st, but will be accepted up until July 15th, since these funds do not come directly from the Graduate College. Special consideration should be given for offers funded by departments, grants, or foundations given to International Students since any delay would impact on their VISA paperwork.
- Once the Graduate College reviews the offer form, and determines the student meets initial eligibility requirements, a formal letter of offer for a Graduate Assistantship will come directly from the Dean of the Graduate College via email with a copy to departmental employees listed on the offer form.
- The University of Northern Iowa has supported a resolution by the Council of Graduate Schools that students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15;

earlier deadlines for acceptance of such offers violate the intent of this Resolution. In those instances in which a student accepts an offer before April 15, and subsequently desires to withdraw that acceptance, the student may submit in writing a resignation of 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 has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer. It is further agreed by the institutions and organizations subscribing to the Resolution that a copy of this Resolution or a link to the URL should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistantship offer.

- It is the responsibility of the department head or designee to notify students, in a timely fashion, who have not been recommended for an award.
- If a student declines the Graduate Assistantship offer the department can make an offer to another qualified student and an offer form should be initiated for the next selected individual. Any Graduate College funded offers declined after a specified date in May will automatically return to the Graduate College (see Blackboard for specific dates).
- International students may be offered assistantships but additional items need to be considered:
 - Offers to International students should be made as soon as possible to allow time for the student to apply for documents necessary for attending UNI.
 - International students should contact International Graduate Admissions (319-273-2281) during their admission process <https://intladm.uni.edu/graduate-admissions>.
 - If an international student will be on an assistantship that involves teaching or tutoring undergraduate students, the employing unit must verify that the assistant's command of the English language is sufficient to allow easy communication with undergraduate students in a classroom.

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Graduate Assistantship Offer Acceptance Process

The steps for students to accept or decline their offer(s) are as follows:

- Students must use the electronic link within their offer letter to accept or decline the Graduate Assistantship offer by the due date listed in the offer letter. When the offer is accepted or declined, an automatic email will be sent to the Graduate College and those listed on the offer form.
- If a student accepts an offer and later wants to decline, before the start of the semester, the student must go to the original offer letter and click on the link provided and then select decline.
- If a student accepts an offer and later wants to decline, after the start of the semester, then the student should follow directions in the Resignation of a Graduate Assistantship section of this handbook.

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Process for Assistantships after Offer is Accepted

Fall semester PAFs can be initiated any time after a student has accepted their assistantship offer and meets the eligibility. Spring semester PAF's can be initiated starting the last week of October. The PAF should be submitted once the student meets the following requirements:

- Has an UNI cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Must maintain a UNI cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for the entire semester. All grades must be posted in order for a GPA to be verified. Newly admitted graduate students must have at least a 3.00 grade point average for undergraduate or previous graduate work of at least 8 graded graduate-level credit hours.
- If students have a missing grade it is their responsibility to contact their instructor to make sure the grade gets posted timely. Students with a missing grade will not be able to start their assistantship until a grade is posted for that course and then their GPA will be verified.
- Students with a grade of "I" (Incomplete) will not be able to start their assistantship until a grade is posted for that course and then their GPA will be verified. Students with an incomplete grade who have extenuating circumstances can request an exception. Students should send their request to the Graduate College Dean via email and carbon copy to their advisor. The request needs to

include details of the extenuating circumstances as well as the timeline to make up the incomplete grade. The student will be contacted after a decision is made.

- Enrolled in at least 9 qualifying on-campus graduate-level credit hours for each semester during the award.
- The following cannot be used as part of the qualifying on-campus graduate level credit hours:
 - Workshops, off-campus courses, audit, courses taken as credit/no-credit (except courses required by accreditation institutions), undergraduate, CIEP, Guided Independent Study (GIS) and courses through Continuing Education and Special Programs.
 - Repeated courses taken in a prior semester with financial support.
- Students in their final semester need a minimum of 3 qualifying credit hours of required coursework to complete their degree. It is expected that all courses applying to the degree meet the minimum hour requirements for program completion established by the Graduate College. A student request, Substitution or Declaring courses should be done for any of these courses that do not automatically plot to the degree. Courses taken for the completion of certificates must be complementary to the degree program.
- Students in their final semester need a minimum of 3 qualifying credit hours of required coursework to complete their degree. The remaining credit hours (6 or less) of coursework do not need to apply to the student's degree program. Students requiring only a few credits to graduate their last semester should consider financial implications of the decision in taking additional courses.
- Has official transcripts on file in the Office of Admissions showing that bachelors (or any other required) degree has been conferred.
- Be regularly admitted without provisions to degree status in a graduate degree program. Students may be eligible for an assistantship when the provisions are not linked to the GPA or English language requirement
- Completed new hire paperwork in Human Resource Services.

Important: Students need to have all requirements met before mid-August in order to be guaranteed an August paycheck during fall and by the first week of January to be guaranteed they will receive a January paycheck during spring. Employment must not begin before the first day of classes of each semester. If new hire paperwork is not completed and not received within three days of the effective employment date, by Federal regulations, steps will be taken to terminate the GA appointment.

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Absences

GAs are not awarded sick or vacation days. Illnesses or unanticipated extenuating circumstances may prevent a student from performing assistantship duties. If this is a short-term situation, GA may work with their supervisor and not have a reduction in pay. If this is a long term situation or habitual situation or the GA are not in communication with their supervisor, a different procedure for withdrawal will occur.

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Remote Work

- Graduate Assistantships are on-campus positions. Supervisors may determine that some, not all, of the work may be completed remotely within the state of Iowa only.
- Remote work outside of the state of Iowa is prohibited for Graduate Assistants because of state and local employment laws.
- For positions where the employee has an extraordinary reason for requesting remote work, the student should seek approval from the Graduate College and the Human Resources Services office.

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Graduate Assistantship Supervisor Responsibilities

Graduate Assistant's supervisors are required to perform many responsibilities, some of which are outlined below. Please note, there may be other supervisor responsibilities or duties not included in this listing. GA supervisors are required to:

- Meet with the GA on the first day of work to review (a) the student's job description in detail, and (b) discuss the expectations of both the student and the supervisor.
- Work closely with the GA during the entire semester to assure GA is carrying out assigned duties and goals.
- Work with the GA to set up a work schedule to assure GA will meet the required weekly hours of work.
- Have regular weekly contact with GA.
- Monitor the hours the GA is working and GA's performance.
 - If a student is not showing up for work, or not putting in required work hours, or not performing duties at a satisfactory level, the supervisor should follow the [Termination Guidelines](#).
- Review University and departmental rules and regulations with the GA.
- Conduct the [Performance Appraisal](#) process.

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Graduate Assistantship Performance Appraisal

Evaluation is a crucial part of the Graduate Assistantship experience. It should be a supportive, constructive, and on-going process that helps identify strengths as well as weaknesses and develops a plan for improvement. All GAs must receive a formal performance appraisal by their supervisor each semester as follows.

- The student must be provided a job description and be given clear information by the supervisor about job expectations at the beginning of the employment period and must be informed of the ways in which progress will be measured.
- An informal performance appraisal should be conducted 3 weeks after the student's start date.
- A formal performance appraisal needs to be conducted at the end of the semester.
- At any point during the semester, additional performance appraisals may be conducted at the request of the Graduate Assistant or their supervisor.
- The department must use the Graduate Assistant Performance Appraisal form, which is located on the Graduate College Blackboard organization folder.

The formal performance appraisal process involves the student and the supervisor discussing a written evaluation and is intended to be constructive and to serve as an aid to the Graduate Assistant in correcting any cited performance problems. Following the review, the performance appraisal form will be signed by the Graduate Assistant, Supervisor, and Graduate Program Coordinator or Department Head. Both the student and the supervisor share responsibility for ensuring that the evaluation process is carried out. The performance evaluation should be kept in the Graduate Assistant's personnel file in the department. Any evaluations that are not satisfactory or with discipline issues, and all related documentation, need to be sent to Human Resources immediately. A copy of these should also be kept in the GA's personnel file for at least 3 years once the student is no longer a Graduate Assistant in the department.

Note: HRS offers supervisor performance appraisal training. HRS has online training available on their website.

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UNI Policies and Procedures

UNI Mission Statement

The University of Northern Iowa at Cedar Falls is recognized as having a mission of sufficient scope to enable it to be a distinguished arts and sciences university with outstanding professional programs in education and business. It provides leadership in the development of programs for the preservice and in-service preparation of teachers and other educational personnel for schools, colleges, and universities. The institution offers undergraduate and graduate programs and degrees in the liberal arts and sciences, including selected areas of technology. It offers pre-professional programs and conducts research and community outreach programs to strengthen the educational, social, cultural, and economic development of Iowa and the larger community.

For more information, please visit <https://policies.uni.edu/102>.

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Drug-Free Workplace and Schools Policy

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) is committed to providing a drug-free workplace and learning environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of university faculty, staff, students, and visitors. This policy is intended to comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act

Amendments of 1989 and the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991. This policy is also intended to serve in maintaining the health and safety of the University's faculty, staff, students, and visitors, in addition to providing the practice and procedure for managing issues regarding drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace and on campus.

For more information, please visit <http://www.uni.edu/policies/413> and <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1318>.

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Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy

The University of Northern Iowa is committed to achieving fairness and equity in all aspects of the educational enterprise and therefore prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation under this policy. Alleged violations of this policy are subject to resolution using the Complaint Resolution Process. This policy applies regardless of the status of the parties involved, who may be members or non-members of the campus community, students, student organizations, faculty, administrators, and/or staff.

For more information, please visit <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1302>.

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Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination Statement

No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, any educational program, or any activity of the University, on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran or military status, or on any other basis protected by federal and/or state law.

For more information, please visit <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1303>.

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Accommodations of Disabilities Policy

No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination by the University. This policy applies to all aspects of campus activities including

employment, education, student programming, and services provided to the community at-large. For more information, please visit <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1315>.

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